

REFLECTIONS

UPON THE

CONSTITUTION

AND

MANAGEMENT

OF THE

Trade to Africa,

THROUGH

The whole Course and Progress
thereof, from the Beginning of the last Century,
to this Time.

WHEREIN

The Nature and uncommon Circumstances of that
TRADE are particularly consider'd; and all the Arguments
urg'd alternately by the Two contending Parties here,
touching the different Methods now proposed by them, for
carrying on the same to a National Advantage, impartially
stated and consider'd.

By all which,

A clear View is given of such a Constitution, as (if establish'd
by Act of Parliament) would, in all Probability, render the AFRICAN
Trade a permanent, creditable and advantageous Trade to BRITAIN.

Ovid. de Remed. Am.

Et quæ non prosunt singula, juncta juvant.

L O N D O N :

Printed, and Sold by JOHN MORPHEW, near Stationer's
Hall, MDCCIX.

(Price One Shilling hith'd.)

To the Reader.

TRADER is so universally become the celebrated Object of the Desires and Affections of all Nations, that they court it with such eager Addresses as commonly exposes many of them, to the Hazard of encountering violent Storms and other Dangers; yea frequently, even Death it self in all its various and most terrible Shapes. And since it is acknowledg'd that Trade (so difficult to be obtain'd, tho' easily lost) has been the Source and chief Foundation of the Riches, Strength, Power and Greatness of this Kingdom; it is no wonder if we look with a very jealous Eye, on all such Steps of any of our neighbouring Nations, or others, as may seem to have a Tendency towards the supplanting us in the Enjoyment of any essential Part thereof.

And there being no Branch of any foreign Trade whatsoever, beyond the Limits of Europe, so naturally adapted to the Interest of Britain and the Plantations thereunto belonging, as the Trade to Africa is, I thought it might be no unacceptable piece of Service to the Publick, to bestow some vacant Hours in collecting such proper Materials as might give a just and clear View of the past and present State thereof; when so many People of all sides seem to be industriously hurried on, into quite different and divided Sentiments, concerning the Establishment of a Constitution suitable to the Nature and Circumstances of that Trade: And have therefore, in the following Sheets, adventur'd to publish such Matters of Fact as have occur'd to my Observation, with my own private Sentiments thereupon.

I have, for the Reader's Ease, endeavour'd to observe something of a regular Method throughout this Treatise, by dividing it into several Chapters, under different Heads, and marking some Note of every Section upon the Margin, except in the last Chapter, which is differently disposed: Yet the reasoning Part is so chain'd together, in one continu'd Thread, that a Stranger to the several Points of Fact discuss'd therein, can scarcely be Master of any one Chapter, without referring in several Particulars to some of the rest.

I must own that, as in many Volumes of far greater Bulk, so in these few Sheets, the most trifling part takes up the greatest room; for indeed the most material Part thereof might have been easily comprehended in a much narrower Compass: But in obviating several fallacious Positions and Suggestions insisted upon by particular Persons, I was necessarily oblig'd to trace their Steps thro' ma-

To the Reader.

ny Windings and Turnings, backward and forward; which gave occasion to several Repetitions and Digressions, which otherways had been altogether needless.

I can easily foresee, that some People may be apt to mistake me for some Person concern'd in the Royal-African-Company; but I solemnly profess, upon my Veracity, and as I would be believed in the greatest of Truths, that I have no particular or immediate Concern in either the Stock of that Company, or of any of the separate Traders to Africa; and may therefore reasonably hope to be the less suspected of Partiality in what I write, concerning both or either of these contending Parties: Yea I can safely averr that, when first I entred upon making any particular Enquiry into the Nature and State of the African Trade, for my own private Satisfaction: No Man in this City could have had less Biass upon his Inclination, in relation to that Matter: But when, in my search after Truth, I met with what to me seem'd to be a certain Evidence (whether so or not) it was not possible for me to stand Proof against Conviction: And having once fully convinced my self, I could not well stand Neuter any longer in such a National Concern: And I hope that my having been at some Pains to convince my self in the first place, may probably be one good step towards the convincing of others.

If, in the Warmth of Reasoning, I may have happen'd to drop any Word or Sentence, at which either of the Parties may take the least Offence, it is more than I intended; for, I am so far from having any personal Prejudice against any of them, that, even where I seem to be hardest on either side, I shun pointing at any one Man in particular; and indeed, all along, I mean no more than barely to overturn such of their Arguments as seem'd to have no real Foundation: But the Truth is, it was almost impossible to touch any of the separate Traders Pamphlets, without the Hazard of being infected with some part of the Scurrility of their Stile and Language: At least so far as to make it recoil upon the Authors.

The Italians (who are said to be a most cunning and discerning People) have a very odd, but shrewd proverbial Prayer: God preserve me from my Friends; I'll beware of my Enemies. The Moral of which is, no doubt, that our Friends (if they take Advantage thereof) have many more Opportunities of betraying, deceiving and over-reaching us; than our professed Enemies can ever be supposed to have. The Consideration of which, may sufficiently justify my being so Particular in several Chapters concerning the Proceedings of our Friends, the Dutch, and separate Traders on the Coast of Africa.



REFLECTIONS

UPON THE

Constitution and Management

OF THE

AFRICAN TRADE, &c.

The INTRODUCTION.



EXPERIENCE, that great Baffler of Speculation, makes it evident, by innumerable Instances which may be brought from the Annals and Transactions of all Ages, that the wisest of Councils, even Parliaments, have been, and still may be, mistaken in their Measures and Views of Things, whenever they proceed either upon Mis-information as to Points of Fact, or upon bare speculative Suppositions.

Thence it is, that our Legislators have so frequently, upon better Information, found it necessary to alter, amend, and sometimes repeal several Laws and Acts, even of their own making, and to enact new ones in their stead.

When the Parliament *Anno 9 & 10 Gulielmi* thought fit to pass an Act, for settling the Trade to *Africa*, in such manner as is particularly expressed in the said Act; beyond all Peradventure, they did it upon such Grounds and Views, as seem'd most Reasonable to them at the Time; and I freely own, that tho' I had not any particular Concern in that Act, yet I was one of the Number of those who could not then forbear expressing a Satisfaction at the passing thereof; as giving implicate Credit to the plausible Topick then made use of: That the laying of that Trade open, without any Restraint or Limitation,

tation, would not only have been more agreeable to the common liberty of the Subject, but be likewise a mean to improve and carry it on, to the more general Satisfaction and Advantage of the whole Nation: For the Truth is, I had not then examin'd, or fully consider'd, the Nature and Circumstances of that Trade, as differing from that of all others, in many Respects.

Yet when in the Course of above ten years Tryal and Experience of letting that Trade lie open to all Her Majesty's Subjects indistinctly, we see that the Success thereof falls so far short of our Expectations, that neither the Company alone, nor the separate Traders jointly consider'd, nor the *British* Plantations in *America*, nor the Nation in general, are Gainers thereby; yea, that on the contrary, the Company's Joint-Stock seems to be daily decreasing; the separate Traders are some of them ruin'd, and others discourag'd by considerable Losses; the Planters complaining extremely of the great Scarcity of, and extravagant Advance upon the Price of Negroes, while others, at the same Time, are complaining of the Low and Mean Prices of Woollen and other *British* Manufactures, on the Coast of *Guinea*; and if some few of them happen to be Gainers by that Trade, I have too much Ground to believe, that their Success is not so much the Effect of the present Constitution, as of some other indirect Causes: The Consideration of all which, did induce me to make some Enquiry into what should be the real Cause of this great Disappointment to the Nation: And for obtaining Satisfaction therein, I was desirous to have, in the first Place, conversed with, and procured Information from some of the separate Traders themselves, as to what related more immediately to their several and respective Interests: But these Gentlemen not having any particular fix'd Place, nor common Trustees or Servants that I know of, for keeping any general Record of their Proceedings, Correspondencies, Discoveries or Observations, I found it impracticable to obtain such Information or Satisfaction from them, as the Nature of the Case seems to require; and some few of them, with whom I had occasion to converse, upon that Head, insist mainly on the bad Success of the present Company; and that with such undecent Language and spiteful Reflections, as I own, gave me but a very indifferent Impression of either their Temper or Veracity: Tho' as to their own Performances, they commonly shifted treating of such Particulars, as could be of any material Use for my present Purpose; but referr'd me generally to those political Computations and Accounts of Things, which were presented by them, or in their Names, to the Commissioners for Trade and Plantations, and to such printed Abstracts thereof as were dispersed among the Members of Parliament the last Year; on which I could truly lay but very little Stress: Especially since I saw the Suggestions therein contain'd so flatly contradicted, and (at least seemingly) confuted by some certain Observations thereupon, which were soon thereafter printed and publish'd, on behalf of the *Royal-African-Company*: But I shall take Occasion to consider these political Computations, more particularly hereafter, in their proper Place.

I had then recourse to a worthy Gentleman of that Company, who, guessing at the Design of my Enquiry, very frankly and courteously pro-

procured me a sight of their Books, and order'd one of their Clerks to allow me, whenever I pleas'd, the perusal of all such Advices and Accounts, as were, at any time, sent home to the Company, either from the Coast of *Africa*, or the *Western* Plantations; which (notwithstanding all the Difficulties under which, I find, they have long struggled) yielded me infinitely more Satisfaction than at first I could have well imagin'd: For whosoever would be at the Pains to go thro' the several Volumes of Memoirs, Declarations, Affidavits and Epistolatory Accounts, which they have by them, full of the Company's Transactions with relation to the *Dutch, French, Portugueze, Danes, Brandenburgers, Natives, Interlopers*, and separate *Traders*, upon that Coast, for many Years past, may easily see that the different Interests and Designs of our many contending Rivals, for engrossing the Riches and Trade of that vast Continent, together with the many new Circumstances and unexpected Emergencies which must daily attend such a Rivalship and Emulation in Trade, do naturally require a very considerable Joint-Stock, a coercive Power, exact OEconomy, intense and vigilant Application, and a larger Share of the Royal and Parliamentary Countenance at Home, and Protection Abroad, than the present Company has ever had, for carrying on that Trade, so as to make it a permanent, creditable and advantageous Trade to the Nation.

To illustrate which Position, I shall not amuse the Reader, with long prefatory Discourses, concerning the many Advantages of foreign Trade in general, or of this valuable Branch thereof in particular; that being a Point so universally acknowledg'd already; that the going about to prove it, would be almost as needless, as to write an elaborate Dissertation, for proving that the Sun, without the Interposition of a Cloud, must shine in our Horizon, by Twelve a Clock of the Day.

But taking it therefore as unquestionably granted, that the Trade to *Africa* is, and must always be, of very great Importance to *Britain*, and the *British* Plantations in *America*; I shall briefly state the main Question in debate thus: Whether, as we are now circumstanced, with relation to our many foreign Competitors, on the Coast of *Africa*; it may be thought more advisable, for the Nation's Interest and Advantage, to carry on that Trade, by a collective Society of capable and intelligent Men, having one and the same Joint-Stock, Interest, Designs, and uniform Rules of Government and Management, with exclusive Privileges, &c. or by all such Persons indistinctly as have a mind to trade thither, when and how they please, with separate Stocks, divided Interests, and different Designs, and Rules of Management?

Truly, for my part, I think that, according to such Views as I have now of these Matters, the very putting of the Question seems near to resolve it; yet in order to discuss it more distinctly, and to the more general Satisfaction of all who think themselves any way concern'd, and that I may not seem to advance my own Opinion too Magisterially, without considering the Nature and Importance of the Point controverted, I shall, with as much Brevity and Perspicuity as I can, make some Retrospection into the Progress of our Trade to

Africa, ever since we had any footing there; consider the Methods and Politicks always practised by our Rivals on that Coast: And by comparing the Transactions of past Times, with our present Circumstances, draw such natural Inferences and Conclusions from the same, as (without regard to the private Interest, Caprice, Humour or Designs of particular contending Parties) may seem most agreeable to Reason, and most conducive to the Improvement and Security of the *British* Interest in general, on that Coast for the future.

An Account of the Rise and Progress of our Trade to AFRICA, preceding the Year 1697.

The first Attempt made by the English, for trading to Africa proved abortive.



ABOUT the latter end of *Q. Elizabeth's*, and in the beginning of Her Successor King *James's* Reign, some *London-Adventurers* made several Attempts separately, for carrying on a Trade to the Coast of *Africa*; yet all that I can find any of them ever gain'd thereby, was merely a bare Discovery, and dear-bought Experience, that probably an advantageous Trade might have been carried on thither, provided they had had a Stock and Power sufficient for that End, and had known how to preserve their Men from the dangerous Influence and Effects of the Pestilential Air of that strange Climate; and from the barbarous Cruelties of the treacherous Natives: But these Adventurers wanting proper Means for the aforesaid Purposes, and meeting with some severe Rebukes, upon that Account, did by degrees lay aside all Thoughts of making any farther Attempts that way.

K. James 1st. grants an exclusive Charter for trading to Africa.

Whereupon King *James* did in the 16th Year of his Reign, grant a Charter under the Great Seal of *England*, to Sir *Robert Rich* and other Citizens of *London* therein mentioned, together with such other Persons as they should think fit, to assume and incorporate into one Body-Politick, for raising a Joint-Stock, to carry on a Trade to *Africa*; and that with exclusive Privileges, as to all His Majesty's other Subjects, under no less Penalty, than the Forfeiture of both Ship and Cargo, to the Use of these Joint-Adventurers, for their Encouragement.

Private Traders intrude, and then the Trade is quite relinquish'd.

But scarcely had this Infant-Company of Joint-Adventurers made the Experiment of two or three several Voyages, when some other private Merchants, becoming envious of these their Fellow-Citizens apparent view of Success, would needs try their own Fortunes likewise, by interloping clandestinely upon the same Coast; upon Discovery whereof, some Disputes did arise between them and the Company, which breaking out soon thereafter into an open Rupture; the Company insisted upon the Privileges of their Charter; the other on their natural Right; and both Parties growing wearied at last with such Debates, as well as with their mutual Losses, withdrew the shatter'd Remains of their several and respective Stocks; by which Means that Trade happen'd to lie again wholly neglected for some Years together.

In the mean time, some other European Nations; but more especially the *Dutch*, pursuing still their Designs of fixing and securing to themselves the Trade of *Africa*, by cultivating a Friendship with the Natives, building of Forts, and settling of Factories on that Coast; and by supplanting the *Portuguese*, who were settled there long before them; some of our most intelligent Merchants represented the same to King *Charles* the First, as also the Consequences which they thought might naturally attend the supine Neglect of that Trade; whereupon His Majesty did, in the Seventh Year of his Reign, grant a new Charter, under the Great Seal, to *Humphrey Slaney, Nicholas Crisp* and Company; with such ample Privileges, Exclusions, Prohibitions and Penalties, as in the former Charter were contain'd: Which last Charter was in the Year 1651. confirm'd and exemplify'd to *Rowland Wilson* and Company, by the Governing Power at that Time.

The Dutch very intent on that Trade. K. Charles 1st grants an exclusive Charter, which was confirmed by the Usurpers, in 1651.

But considering the many Convulsive-Fits and Distractions which in those Days embroil'd and confounded the Government of both Church and State throughout this Island, we need not wonder that our Trade to *Africa* fell, at the same time, into very great Disorders; for the unrestrain'd Liberty which Interlopers assum'd of trading as they pleased, without any regard to the Rights of the Company, set them and the Company together by the Ears; and then the *Dutch* and *Danish* Companies taking hold of the Opportunity which our Domestic Commotions and Divisions did administer to their Designs, they encreased the Number of their Forts, Factories and Ships of War on the Coast of *Africa*; by which they not only encourag'd, advanc'd and defended their own Trade and Navigation, but likewise wholly obstructed that of their Neighbours; insomuch, that beside demolishing the Forts, and quite ruining the Stock of that Company, they took the Ships and Goods of other private *English* Traders to the Value of about Three Hundred Thousand Pounds; as appear'd by their Petitions to the Parliament, after the Restauration of King *Charles* the Second.

Interlopers break in; the Trade is quite open; The Dutch and Danes seize the Ships and Goods of English Traders, and the Trade ruin'd.

How far these Losses were any way consider'd or repair'd, by that Parliament, I know not: But upon a Representation made soon thereafter, to King *Charles* the Second, that the *British* Plantations in *America* were, by degrees, advancing to such a Condition as necessarily requir'd a greater yearly Supply of Servants and Labourers, than could well be spar'd from hence, without the Danger of depopulating His Majesty's Native Dominions; His Majesty did, (upon Account of supplying these Plantations with Negroes) publicly invite all his Subjects to the Subscription of a new Joint-Stock, for recovering and carrying on the Trade to *Africa*; and the then design'd Subscription being compleated accordingly, His Majesty did in the Year 1662. grant a new Charter to the Subscribers of that Joint-Stock, by the Name of the Company of *Royal-Adventurers* of *England* for carrying on a Trade to *Africa*; with the same Exclusions, Prohibitions, Penalties, Forfeitures and Immunities, which were contain'd in the several Charters formerly mention'd.

K. Charles 2^d invites his Subjects to raise a Joint-Stock for carrying on the African Trade. And in the Year 1662. grants an exclusive Charter to the Subscribers.

*The Dutch War
breaking out;
Adm. De Ruy-
ter destroys, or
takes the Eng-
lish Forts in
Africa, seizes
their Ships and
Goods, &c.*

But scarcely had that new Company put themselves into a Condition of trading, when a War breaking out with the States of *Holland*, in the Year 1664, the *Dutch* (who seldom or never neglected the taking hold of any Opportunity, for engrossing to themselves as much as they could, of either that or any other beneficial Trade) did, in the very beginning of that War, send Orders to their Admiral *De Ruyter*, with a Squadron of Thirteen Men of War, which lay then at *Gibraltar*, to make Sail for the Coast of *Guinea*, and to set upon the *English* there; which he so effectually perform'd, that in the Year 1665. he not only destroy'd most of their Factories, took *Cormanteen Castle*, *Tocorary Fort*, and other Places on that Coast, but likewise seized on several Ships and Goods belonging to the *English* Company; insomuch that their Loss thereby was computed to upwards of Two Hundred Thousand Pounds; by which Means, that Company's Stock was so much reduced, that they were quite discourag'd, as well as disabled, from making any farther considerable Efforts, for retrieving and carrying on that Trade to any Purpose, without some new help.

*K. Charles 2d.
upon surrender
of the former
Charter, grants
a new Charter,
with encoura-
ging Privileges
to the present
Royal African
Company, 1672.*

Whereupon His Majesty considering, that the said Trade was in imminent Danger of being wholly lost to the Nation, and conceiving that the establishing a New-Company, with a New-Stock, upon surrender of the former Company's Charter, would be the most effectual Means, for recovering and carrying on that Trade, did, in the Year 1671. publicly invite all his Subjects residing in foreign Plantations, as well as here at Home, to subscribe what Sums they pleas'd, towards carrying on the aforesaid Trade; and thereupon many of the Nobility, Gentry and Merchants, having, in the Compass of Nine Months Time thereafter, subscribed for, and compleated the then design'd Stock; His Majesty granted a new Charter in the Year 1672. to these new Subscribers, distinguish'd by the Denomination of the *Royal-African-Company of England*; with the same Exclusions and Privileges which the former Company had: It being previously stipulated, that out of this last Stock, Satisfaction should be given to the former Company, for the estimated Value of the Remains of such Castles, Forts and Settlements, as were then in their Possession on the Coast of *Africa*, which was done accordingly.

*The African
Trade very ad-
vantagous to
the Company,
and the Nation
in general be-
fore the Inter-
lopers intruded
after the Revo-
lution.*

The Trade to *Africa* being thus settled again, and carried on, by the uniform Influence, Direction and Management of a Society of Persons, who had the Countenance and Protection of the Government, at that Time; they introduced and encouraged the making of several Sorts of Woollen and other Goods, proper for the Trade of *Guinea*, not formerly manufactur'd in *England*, and reduced the making thereof, to a staple and settled Goodness; they exported yearly upwards of Seventy Thousand Pounds worth of the said Woollen, and other Manufactures; and gave far better Prices for the same, than what usually is now given for the like; they furnish'd the *Western* Plantations with frequent Supplies of considerable Numbers of Negroes, at very moderate Rates; and in so encouraging a manner too, that they sometimes trusted the Planters, to the Value of a Hundred Thousand Pounds and upwards, till they could conveniently pay the same; They imported, (beside *Elephant's Teeth*, *Red-wood*, and other

Goods

Goods, fit for being manufactured at Home) such Quantities of Gold-Dust from the Coast of *Africa*, that they frequently Coin'd Thirty, Forty, or Fifty Thousand Guineas at a time, with the Elephant upon them, for a Mark of Distinction; and in effect they managed Matters so, as that, for several Years together, that Trade did not only produce an annual Dividend of certain Profits, to all the particular Adventurers in the Joint-Stock, beside a Multiplication of their Capital; but likewise several other publick and National Advantages to the whole Kingdom, and the *British* Plantations in general.

But some time, after the late Revolution, several private Traders (then commonly call'd *Interlopers*) assuming again a Liberty of trading separately to *Africa*, without any regard to the Company's Charter, few or none of them had then any other Consideration in view, than barely the ready Disposal of all such Cargoes as they carried along with them (no matter to whom, or which way) and the speedy procuring of Negroes, or any other Commodities which they could get on that Coast, whether by Purchase or otherways, so as not to stay long there; for accomplishing which Design, they stuck at nothing; but were too frequently guilty of such sinister Practices, as proved not only very injurious to the private Interest of the Company, but likewise Disgraceful and Pernicious to the *British* Interest in general, among the Natives; insomuch, that the Company's Agents were frequently obliged to vindicate the Company, by making the Natives sensible that they were none of the Company's Ships or Servants: And as the Impunity of such Practices did encourage the Authors to persevere, for some time, in such like Courses; so others likewise taking their Views and Measures from the seeming Success of the former, without any regard to the Consequences of trading in that manner, join'd in an Outcry against the Privileges of the Company, as a Monopoly inconsistent with the Liberty of the Subject, and not establish'd by Act of Parliament; and that therefore they would exercise their natural Right of trading to *Africa*, as well as the Company.

The Interlopers break in upon the Company's Privileges, and are guilty of several undue Practices.

Thus they went on, for some time; and to give the more colourable Title to such their Proceedings, they never fail'd to magnify and improve any casual Loss or Misfortune which happen'd to the Company, during the late War; as if that had been the natural Effect of trading by a Joint-Stock; insomuch, that whosoever could contrive the most effectual Methods for lessening the Company's Credit and Interest, either at Home or Abroad, whether by Detraction or otherways, was among them accounted the bravest Adventurer.

The Interlopers endeavour to lessen the Company's Credit.

Nor were the Agents of other Nations, particularly those of the *Dutch-West-India-Company*, ever wanting in cherishing, upon all occasions, the Authors and Fomenters of any Divisions in the *British* Interest, on the Coast of *Guinea*; but endeavour'd, with all their Art and Skill, to make such Improvements thereof, as they thought might best serve their Ends, with the Natives upon that Coast.

The Dutch Company's Agents foment Divisions in the British Interest in Guinea.

Where-

The Royal African Company address'd the Parliament: But the Parliament 1697. is induced to lay the Trade open for thirteen Years.

Whereupon after long Forbearance, the Company at last address'd the Parliament, by Petition, for Relief: But some others, at the same time, alledging very confidently, that if the Trade to *Africa*, were laid open, to all such Persons as had a mind to trade thither, the same would not only be more agreeable to the natural Liberty of the Subject, but also that thereby several new Discoveries would be made, many Places then unknown traded into, much greater Quantities of the *English* Manufactures exported of course; and that the Plantations would be furnish'd with Negroes, in greater Numbers, and at cheaper Rates, than could be expected from the Company alone: By which alluring Suggestions, and plausible Pretences, the Parliament was, in the Year 1697. induced to make an Experiment, by giving Permission to all Persons whosoever, as well as the Company, to trade to *Africa*, for the Term and Space of Thirteen Years; they paying to the Company a Duty of Ten *per Cent.* towards defraying the Charges of their Forts and Castles, for the Defence and Preservation of that Trade to the Nation.

An Account of the Progress of our Trade to AFRICA, since the Year 1697. together with a clear View of the Present State thereof.

The Novelty of laying open the Trade to Africa, by Act of Parliament, induced many to trade thither, who soon repented it.



THE Trade to *Africa* being thus laid open, not only such as were more immediately concern'd in contriving and advancing that Project, but likewise a considerable Number of other Persons, (who before that Time, had scarcely ever any occasion to have examin'd, consider'd or tolerably well understood the Nature and Circumstances of that Trade) becoming it seems intoxicated with such deluding Notions and golden Dreams, as the former had, for obtaining their own private Ends, industriously propagated, touching the vast Gains to be had by a separate Trade to the Gold Coast; did, without any farther Consideration, plunge themselves, over Head and Ears, into an *African* Trade; and persevered therein, for some time, until, by Degrees, most of them came off, at last, with the Weeping-Cross; repenting them too late, of their Credulity and Rashness; and wishing, that instead of pursuing a Trade, which upon Tryal, they found they did not truly understand, they had bestow'd their Time, Credit, Pains and Substance in the carrying on, and Improvement of the several Trades, Callings and Employments, to which they were respectively bred.

Several particular Abuses committed by the private Traders.

But as there ever has been, and in all probability still will be, some sort of People in the World, who make it their Interest to fish in troubled Waters; so, even as to the laying open this Trade, there were too many who wanted no more towards compassing their own private Designs, than the obtaining a legal and uncontrollable Permission for trading separately on the Coast of *Guinea*: Under the Colour of which

which Permission, they have, to the unspeakable Detriment and Discredit of the *British* Interest in general, used such unaccountable Methods, and been guilty of such intolerable Practices, as I could not have believed; if I had not seen several concurring Testimonies, and undeniable Vouchers, for proving the Truth thereof: Some of them surprizing, seizing, and carrying away with them, such Negroes, Elephants-Teeth, and other Goods as happen'd to fall conveniently within their reach, without paying any thing for the same; and making such of these Negroes as they understood to be of any distinguishing Character, redeemable at the rate of Three for One: Others, by Rewards and Promises, enticing many of the Company's Trustees and Servants, to relinquish and abandon their Master's Interest; proclaiming maliciously among the Natives, and all others along the Coast, that the Company was intirely broke, and their Managers here at home threaten'd to be put in *Newgate*, for begging leave, (as they alledged) of the Parliament, to sell their Forts and Factories to the *French*, and deducting two Thirds of their Servants Wages, &c. Which scandalous Allegations happen'd nevertheless to have the design'd pernicious Effect; insomuch that, tho' all the Company's Servants are bound by Oath, not to trade directly or indirectly, during their Service, except only for, and upon account of the Company; yet several of them were, by such means, induced forthwith to desert their Master's Service; others to sell lumping Penny-worths of some of the Company's Negroes, Gold, Elephants-Teeth, and other Goods, to some of the separate Traders, as also to send home several Parcels of Gold, on their own private Accounts, by the separate Trader's Ships; upon discovery of which, or such like Practices, they commonly enter'd into the Service of the separate Traders; and as the separate Trader's Ships were as so many Sanctuaries to such of the Company's Servants, as proved any way Treacherous to their Master's Interest; so the *Dutch* Forts were, and still are, common Sanctuaries to both the former.

Thus the *Dutch* Company's Agents, by cajoling and carelling the separate Traders, and drawing on a subtle kind of smuggling Trade with them, for the Time; as they were not wanting, on the one Hand, in encouraging all such Practices as these, and fomenting daily Divisions in the *British* Interest; so, on the other Hand, they never fail'd, with all their usual Art and Skill, to make a suitable improvement thereof, among the Natives; who thereupon became so insolent as not only to break many of their former Agreements with the Company; but also, on some Occasions, insulted even some of the Company's Forts and Factories, to the great Detriment and Interruption of their Trade; until that, by renewed Presents and other proper Means used, these Differences between them and the Company's Agents, came to be compromised and accomodated, from time to time, according as the Natives happen'd to be more or less influenced, by the Suggestions and Management of either the *Dutch* Agents or separate Traders.

The Company finding themselves so hardly thus beset on all sides, thought fit to contribute and advance a Hundred and Eighty Thousand Pounds of additional Stock, beside what Money they borrowed

The Dutch Company's Agents cajol the private Traders, and instigate the Natives against the Royal African Company.

The Royal African Company raise and advance 180000 l. of additional Stock.

upon their Bonds, for maintaining, repairing and supplying their Forts and Factories, as well as for keeping up some Face of a regular Trade, and preserving the same to the Nation, until they could have a seasonable Opportunity for laying their Case before the Parliament.

The Natives advance the Prices of Negroes, and beat down the Prices of our British Manufactures.

Yet still the Natives, who are known to be a very cunning, as well as deceitful People, never missed catching hold of the Advantages which they saw naturally arising to themselves, from our separate Interests, as well as different Methods of Management: Yea they acted their Part therein so very artfully, that, without regard to either the Company or separate Traders, they not only raised the Price of Negroes, Gold, Elephants-Teeth, and all other *African* Productions, to a most intolerable Rate, far exceeding what the Company ever paid for them, before the Trade was laid open; but have also, at the same time, depreiated and beat down the Value of all Woollen and other *British* Manufactures, to a meer Drugg, upon that Coast; in-somuch, that (as the Trade is now managed) it is next to impossible for either the Company, or scarcely any of the separate Traders, who deal upon the Square, or have any regard to a National Interest, to be Gainers by it: For the separate Traders contending always, not only with the Company, but also one with the other, among themselves, for Precedency in point of Dispatch; as having neither Patience nor Convenience, for staying any considerable time, upon the Coast; do commonly submit to such Terms and Conditions of Barter, as the Natives think fit to impose upon them, rather than go away without investing their Goods, or purchasing a competent Number of Negroes, at any rate; by which pernicious Example, the Company's Agents were forced, by degrees, to lower their Sales also; unless they'd resolve to stand by, and look on like so many idle Spectators: And I am convinc'd, it had been better for the Company's particular Interest, that they had done so, all this Time; were it not merely for the Preservation of their Forts and Factories, and for keeping up the Face of a regular Trade; which may still be a Foundation, and yield some prospect of future Gain, if the Trade were once put upon a right Foot.

The Merchant imposes the Negroes on the Planters at exorbitant Rates; and the Planters advance the Prices of Sugar, &c.

Nor do the evil Consequences of these separate Interests stop here; for the Merchant, to save his own Bacon, as much as he can, imposes these Negroes again on the Planters in *America*, at such exorbitant Rates, as the Planters cannot possibly afford to give, without a proportional Advance, on the Prices of *Sugar, Cotton, Indigo, &c.* from all which it may be easily observ'd, that (like a virulent Distemper affecting the Blood) a fundamental Error in the Constitution of so essential a Branch of our foreign Trade, as that to *Africa*, must of course diffuse it self thro' the whole Circle of our Trade in general.

The Royal African Company Petition the Queen to recommend their Case to the Parliament, 1707.

The *Royal-African-Company*, from too convincing a Sense of the many fatal Consequences thus attending such a pernicious and irregular Management, influenced by the several interfering Interests of different contending Parties, as well as from a due regard to their own pressing Circumstances at the Time, thought fit, in *November, 1707.* to address the Queen, by Petition, in a most humble and dutiful Man-

ner, *Praying that Her Majesty would be graciously pleased to recommend their Case to the Parliament:* Which Petition being referr'd to the previous Consideration of the Commissioners for Trade and Plantations; it so happen'd (as it too often does in many other Cases, where such as have the worst Cause, are commonly the most vigilant and industrious) that some of the separate Traders, by an early and close Application, with the help of some political or rather fallacious Computations, as to their own imaginary Performances, and several groundless Suggestions against the Company, had prepossessed the Commissioners, with such an Opinion of the supposed Advantages arising from a separate Trade, compar'd with these of a Joint-Stock; that several Scruples and Questions arising thereupon, the Commissioners were, it seems, afraid that they could not obtain such proper Vouchers and Adminicles from the Coast of *Africa* or the Plantations, in time, as might enable them to put these Matters in so clear a Light, as they could have wish'd, before the end of the last Parliament; and therefore, rather than be thought any way negligent of their Duty, did, in *February* last, prepare a Report to be laid before Her Majesty: Wherein they repeat the several Allegations and political Computations aforesaid, given in to them, in name of the separate Traders, touching the Contents of the Company's said Petition.

And tho' the Dissolution of the last Parliament, before the said Report could have been ripely consider'd, gave occasion, it seems, to its having been laid aside; yet several Copies thereof having clandestinely crept Abroad, and fallen into the Hands of some Persons who make sinister Improvements thereon; my present Purpose obliges me to take some Notice of the political Computations and imaginary Suppositions therein mention'd: For, some of the separate Traders (probably the very same who first had the Confidence to obtrude these fallacious Computations upon the Commissioners) are now, by a new way of reasoning, endeavouring to impose the same vain Imaginations, as real Truths, upon the whole Kingdom, by their Prints and otherways: They repeat the same Suggestions and Computations, upon all Occasions; and, with an Assurance, as singular as their manner of reckoning, quote some certain Paragraphs out of their own Original Allegations, by way of Extracts out of the said Report, and then adduce them as Vouchers, for supporting the very same Allegations again in *Taverns*, *Coffee-Houses*, and elsewhere: Which is such a Circle of Sophistry, for bantering Men out of their Senses, as, I own, surpasseth all the Rules of Logic that ever I heard of.

Referred to the Commissioners for Trade, who prepared a Report thereupon.

The Commissioners Report laid aside; but Copies thereof spread abroad, and sinister Uses made thereof.

A Detection of the fallacious Topicks insisted on by the separate Traders ; with a Continuation of the State of the AFRICAN Trade.

The private Traders Suggestions are particularly confuted by certain Remarks on the said Report lately given in to the Commissioners for Trade.



THINK it needless here, to give the Reader or my self the trouble of tracing these separate Traders, (or rather such as seem now to personate them) thro' the Wilderness of all their wild Suggestions and Imaginations; especially since I am informed, that their Inconsistencies are already more than sufficiently exposed, in a certain Paper lately given in by the *Royal-African-Company* to the Lords Commissioners for Trade and Plantations: Yet, for a Sample and Test of the separate Traders Candor and Ingenuity, to the End that (according to the common Saying) *the Lyon may be known by his Paw*; I shall detect the Fallacies of two or three of these general Topicks, upon which they seem to lay their greatest Strefs; and which, in effect, may be said to include all the rest.

The alledged Export of the separate Traders, proved to be fabulous.

With design, no doubt, to make themselves and their Method of trading very popular and acceptable to the Nation, they alledge in their Prints, that they have exported a Hundred and Twenty Five Thousand Pounds worth of Woollen and other Manufactures yearly, since the Trade to *Africa* has been laid open; yea, by the very Accounts, which they had the Assurance to give in to the aforesaid Commissioners, they make their annual Exports to be about Ninety Eight Thousand Two Hundred and Forty Pounds: And the way they pretend to prove both the one and the other, is thus. They say that they fitted out a certain Number of Ships yearly from the Port of *London*, and a supposed Number of Ships yearly from the Plantations, and the Ports of *Bristol*, *Liverpool*, and other Out-ports of the Kingdom: Then they suppose that every one of these Ships, great and small, one with another, without any Distinction, carried out as valuable a Cargoe as the biggest of those Ships imploy'd by the Company; to this they add the yearly amount of the *Ten per Cent.* Duty paid by them, upon their real Export, when at the highest; and thus by setting one Mountain a top of another, they have, in their own Conceit, rear'd up their imaginary Tower of *Babylon*, to a most prodigious height at last.

An Appeal to the Custom-House-Books.

I must confess, if there could have been no more certain Rule fallen upon, for computing the Value of their yearly Exports, than this fallacious Method of theirs, then the introducing of what they call political Arithmetick, might, in some Measure, have been allowable: But when, to their own certain Knowledge, there are strict and regular Accounts of the Value of all such Exports, as are made by these separate Traders, kept at all the Ports of the Kingdom; and confirmed by the Entries and Oaths of the very Exporters themselves; I think it no breach of Charity to affirm that their not making the *Custom-House-Books* the Standard and Rule of their accounting, in

computing the Value of these Exports, does tacitly imply somewhat more than a bare Suspicion, that the Framers of these political Accounts had a shrewd Design of imposing upon the Nation, to a most insufferable Degree.

But to come closer to the Point, it appears evidently by their own Oaths and Entries, in the *Custom-House-Books* of *London*, *Bristol* and other Out-Ports of the Kingdom, that their annual Exports, these six or seven Years past, in an averidge did not exceed Thirty Three Thousand Eight Hundred and Eighty Three Pounds, Thirteen Shillings and Eight Pence at most: Now, the Oaths of these separate Traders being thus kept upon Record; either they swore justly, or they did not; if justly, (which in Charity I am inclin'd to believe they did) then this Babylonish Tower of their political Computations, falls to the Ground of course: But if otherwise, then it must be allow'd, that they have not only cheated the Company, of their Ten *per Cent.* Duty, for the Overplus of their Exports; but have likewise, to shun the Payment of that Duty, perjur'd themselves into the Bargain. These Gentlemen are at their Liberty to choose which Branch of the Alternative they think fit; and if any of their most celebrated Champions in Sophistry can extricate them handsomely out of this unlucky Dilemma, it's more than I look for.

Then, after supposing an indefinite Number of chymical Suppositions, which no considering or intelligent Person can ever either suppose or grant, they infer (I must own) a most pertinent and natural Conclusion, fully as Supposititious as the Premisses, *viz.* that since the Trade to *Africa* has been laid open, they carried at least Twenty Five Thousand Negroes yearly to the Plantations; and sold them there, from Fourteen to Twenty, and Twenty Three Pounds, *per Head* at most: And to give the better Colour to this fictitious Account, they make a very formal Distribution of these supposed Negroes, among the Plantations thus:

To	{ <i>Barbadoes</i> —————	4000.
	{ <i>The Leeward-Islands</i> —————	4000.
	{ <i>Virginia and Mary-Land</i> —————	4000.
	{ <i>Carolina and New-York</i> —————	1000.
	{ <i>Jamaica</i> —————	12000.
		<hr/>
		25000.

For the Confutation of this fallacious Account, I shall in the first Place, shew the Inconsistency thereof, compar'd with the Amount of their Exports; and adduce undeniable Testimonies, touching the real Numbers of Negroes which they furnish'd to the Plantations, and at what Prices.

By what has been already said, it is evident, that the Amount of the separate Trader's Exports, these six or seven Years past, in an averidge, does not exceed Thirty Three Thousand Eight Hundred and Eighty Three Pounds, Thirteen Shillings and Eight Pence *per Annum* at most.

It is acknowledg'd by all Parties, that the Value of these Exports, consisting chiefly in Woollen-Manufactures, is fallen about *Cent. per Cent.*

A certain Dilemma to which the separate Traders are desired to give a categorical Answer, if they can.

The alledged Numbers of Negroes carried by the separate Traders to the Plantations, proved to be grossly Fictitious

The separate Traders Disingenuity proved from their own undeniable Exports.

Cent. of the Price, at which the Company sold them formerly on the Coast of Guinea.

It's acknowledg'd likewise, that the Prices of Negroes, on the Coast of *Guinea*, is now generally advanced to Ten, Twelve and Thirteen Pounds *per Head*: Yet to see, how far it can serve these Gentlemen's Purpose, I'll allow that they bought all their Negroes at Eight Pounds *per Head*.

Now I'll suppose with them (tho' the contrary be most certain) that they have not bestow'd any part of their Exports, in the Purchasing of either Gold, Elephants-Teeth, Red-wood, Provisions for Negroes, or the like; but that they have invested all the aforesaid Sum of Thirty Three Thousand Eight Hundred and Eighty Three Pounds, Thirteen Shillings and Eight Pence, in Negroes only, at Eight Pounds *per Head*; yet, even at that rate, and in that manner, the aforesaid Sum could not have purchased any more than Four Thousand Two Hundred and Thirty Five Negroes at most.

Then I'll suppose, with them, that no Accident or any Misfortune whatsoever, occasion'd by Sicknefs, Storms, or the War, has lessened that Number, from the Time of purchasing them on the Coast of *Guinea*, till they were deliver'd all safe in the Plantations; and yet still, when I have allow'd these Gentlemen more than, in Reason, I can allow them, I cannot find out any Shadow of Pretence, for supposing a Medium, by which to allow them the remaining Twenty Thousand Seven Hundred and Sixty Five, of their imaginary Number, of Twenty Five Thousand Negroes *per Annum*, unless we suppose them to have dropt from the Clouds.

But leaving this Method of calculating Numbers, by meer Suppositions, to such as are more in love with it, than I am; I come now to the plain, familiar, old-fashion'd way of finding out the Truth or Untruth of People's Assertions, by certain Instances of positive Points of Fact.

*The separate
Trader's dis-
genuity proved
by authentick
Certificates
from the Plan-
tations.*

I have lately seen a Certificate under the Seal of the *Navy-Office* of *Barbadoes*, containing a List of all the Vessels arrived there from the Coast of *Africa*, with an Account of all the Negroes imported in them, from the 2d of *January*, 1701, to the 10th of *August*, 1708. it mentions not only the Ships and Master's Names, with the Days of every Month, on which they arrived, but likewise the respective Numbers of Negroes, which each Ship carried apart: By which Certificate it appears, that the whole Number imported into that Island, by the private Traders, in almost seven Years Time, is only Six Thousand and Sixty Three; which, in an averidge, is little more than Nine Hundred *per Annum*: So that their Fictitious Importation of Four Thousand Negroes *per Annum*, to that Island, may be added to the rest of their Fables.

*The Prices of
Negroes in the
Plantations,
proved by Cer-
tificates from
thence, to be
more than dou-
ble what the
private Tra-
ders alledge.*

Then as to their Candor, in alledging that they sold these Negroes to the Planters, from Fourteen to Twenty and Twenty, Three Pounds *per Head*; I have very lately seen a Petition to the Honourable House of Commons, sign'd by the chief Planters and Inhabitants of *Barbadoes*, complaining of their not being supply'd with a sufficient Number of Negroes; that both the Company and private Traders together, have not, for five Years past, imported thither above Two Thousand

Negroes *per Annum* at most; and that they were sold at extravagant Prices, from Twenty Five to Forty Pounds *per Head*; and I have seen another Petition to the Honourable House of Commons sign'd by Seventy One of the principal Planters and Inhabitants of *Mont-serrat*, complaining likewise of their not being supply'd with a sufficient Number of Negroes; and that the Company and private Traders together, have not, for several Years past, imported above the Number of a Hundred Negroes *per Annum*, to that Island; and that these were sold at extravagant high Prices, from Forty to Sixty *per Head*; and I saw just such another Petition from the Planters of *Nevis*: So whether such Testimonies as these, or the fabulous Accounts publish'd in name of the separate Traders, ought to obtain most Credit, with any indifferent Person, I leave it to the Reader to judge.

I am informed that several other Petitions and Accounts, of the like Nature, are coming from the other *British* Plantations and Colonies in *America*; but, in the mean time, since the private Traders thought fit, in their aforesaid imaginary Distribution, to make an Alotment of no less Number than Twelve Thousand Negroes *per Annum* for *Jamaica*, I must put them in mind, how that, by a particular Account formerly taken, of the several Numbers imported by them in each Ship, in any one of these Years, when they made their greatest Effort, the whole Number imported by them to *Jamaica*, amounted only to Two Thousand Five Hundred and Fifty Three Negroes; so that I must leave it to themselves to make up the remaining Nine Thousand Four Hundred and Forty Seven Negroes, of their annual Alotment for that Island, the best way they can.

It's true, they very imprudently made a mighty Effort, for a Year or two at first; which indeed was occasion'd by their Ignorance and vain Expectations of gaining vastly by a Trade which they did not understand; but finding most of their Ships returning with scarcely one half of their Complement of Slaves; others perishing in their Voyages, by reason of Delays upon the Coast, beside many other Losses following thereupon; the far greatest part of these separate Traders to *Africa*, have already given that Trade quite over; as may easily be judged by this one Instance, That from *August* 1707. to *August* 1708. they have, instead of their boasted Alotment of Four Thousand, imported only One Hundred and Thirty Negroes to *Barbadoes*; the most considerable of all the *Caribbee Islands*.

And tho' in their aforesaid political Computations, they reckon'd upon a supposed Number of Ships, to be yearly sent to *Africa*, from *Liverpool* in particular, upon the Presumption of its being known to be, of late, a Port of considerable Trade otherways; yet, after the Inhabitants of that Place had made an Experiment, as several others did; there has not been so much as one Ship sent from that Town to *Africa*, these six Years past; nor indeed from any other Port in *Britain*, except that of *London*, and some few from *Bristol*.

Yet such is the Perverseness of some People's Temper, that when they find all their loud Acclamations, magnifying their own Performances, not likely to answer their Purpose; then they have recourse to spiteful Investives, against the *Royal-African Company*; alledging, that Forts and Settlements, on the Coast of *Africa*, are altogether unnecessary.

The Number of Negroes imported to Jamaica, incomparably short of the private Traders imaginary Alotment.

Instead of their alledged 4000, the separate Traders imported only 130 Negroes to Barbadoes, in a whole Years time.

Their Allegation of sending Ships from other Ports than that of London, is a meer Fable.

A Summary of the private Traders calumnious Charge against the Company.

necessary, for preserving and carrying on that Trade; and that if Forts should be thought any way Necessary for that Purpose, yet those belonging to the Company are generally Useless, as not being in a Condition to make any Defence: For that beside the alledged Insufficiency of the Fortifications themselves, they are always unprovided of Stores, Ammunition and a sufficient Number of Guns, and Men to defend them: And as an Instance thereof, they confidently assert that *James-Fort* in the River of *Gambia*, and *Sierra-Leon* were taken by the *French*, in open Boats. Adding farther, that all the Company's Forts and Castles, jointly estimated, are not worth above 4100*l.* and concluding, by a sort of fantastical Account, of their own devising, that the Company's Stock must needs be worse than nothing.

To obviate all which unaccountable Suggestions, I shall in the first place adduce several Instances of positive Points of Fact to prove the Inconsistency, as well as gross folly, of the aforesaid Allegations; and then demonstrate, from the uncommon Nature, and many precarious Circumstances of the Trade, the absolute Necessity of maintaining Forts and Settlements on the Coast of *Africa*, for preserving and advancing the *British* Interest there.

The private
Traders Charge
confuted from
their own
Words.

The Sincerity of these Gentlemen's Representations of things may be clearly seen from their own Words as they are repeated in the Lords Commissioners Report, formerly mention'd: They say in one part of the Report, *That Forts and Castles are neither an Advantage or Security to the Trade, but an unnecessary Burthen; For that, in time of Peace, no Advantage can be assign'd to balance the Expence; and in War they are not Defensible against a foreign Enemy;* and yet, by a subsequent part of the same Report, it appears that the private Traders, to aggravate their Suggestions against the Company, have exhibited a grievous Complaint, *That the Company has not erected any Fort on the Angola-Coast, which (they say) would have been of great Benefit to the Traders thither; for that in the Year 1701, Capt. Eterson and Capt. Cook were both taken, and the Informer himself (whose Name is not mention'd) with others forced on Shore, for want of a Fort to defend them from the Enemy.* This is such a self-evident Contradiction, that it puts me in mind of the old Proverb: *Liars ought to have good Memories.* Nor indeed can I imagine how they can pretend to reconcile this latter Complaint, with their former Assertion; unless they make a very subtle Distinction, between the Usefulness of Forts on the Coast of *Angola*, and that of Forts on the Coast of *Guinea*; which truly would be as ridiculous as to say, in plain Terms, that Forts are necessary where the *Dutch* have none; and that where they have Forts, we need have none.

The private
Traders confu-
ted from Points
of Fact.

But to evacuate that Pretence likewise, in case they should happen to build upon it, I shall condescend on some of many Instances, which may be given, for proving the Usefulness of the latter; even to the private Traders themselves; as particularly at *Whidach*: The Company's Chief, by his Interest and Power with the King there, and by threatening to intercept the Trade of that Country, by firing from the Company's Fort, &c. obtain'd Restitution of a Ship with Three Hundred Negroes taken in that Road by the *French*; which Ship did belong to Mr. *Heysham*, now a Member of Parliament: And the

the *Mary of Barbadoes*, Capt. *Codnor*, Master, and several other Ships belonging to the separate Traders and their Cargoes have, under the Protection of *Cape-Coast-Castle*, and by its great firing upon the Enemy, been frequently preserved; yea and their Slaves and Goods taken into the Castle, for farther Safety, when attempted to have been taken by the *French* Men of War and Privateers, out of *Cape-Coast Road*.

As to the separate Traders Allegation, that *James-Fort* and *Sierra-Leon* have been taken from the Company, by the *French*, in open Boats; I shall wave the Company's own Testimony in that Matter, lest it may be thought too partial in their own Favour, and betake my self wholly to the publick Account thereof, which may be seen at large in the *Sieur Froger's* printed Relation of *Monsieur de Genne's* Voyage to the Coast of *Africa*, &c. by which it will appear, that *Monsieur de Genne's* had a Squadron of six Ships of Force, along with him in that Expedition; and by the Articles of Capitulation, as they are particularly recited in the 21st, 22^d, 23^d and 24th Pages of the said Book, it is specially declared that, at the time of signing the said Articles, *the several Goods after-mention'd did belong to the Royal-African-Company, viz. Five Hundred Quintals of Morphil (or Elephants-Teeth) Three Hundred Quintals of Wax, One Hundred and Thirty Male-Negroes, Forty Females in the Island; Fifty at Gillofree, and above Eighty Thousand Crowns of Merchandizes, at the usual Rates of the Country, as also Seventy Two large Cannons mounted, Thirty not mounted, and a considerable Quantity of Warlike Ammunition:* And in the 25th Page, the Author (who was in Person along with *Monsieur de Genne's* in that Expedition, and consequently not a meer Repeater of Stories, at the second or third Hand) gives a full and particular Description of the said Fort; and, after taking Notice of its being furnish'd with a prodigious Quantity of Arms, and that the Magazines of Powder were well stored, he declares expressly that, *if the Governour had done his Duty, the said Fort had been Impregnable.* From all which the Reader may judge of the private Trader's Veracity in other Particulars.

The private Traders Allegation, concerning James-Fort, &c. disproved by the indisputable Testimony of a common Enemy.

Then as to the Value of all the Company's Forts, 'tis manifestly known, that in the Year 1672. the *Royal-African-Company* paid Thirty Four Thousand Pounds to their Predecessors for the Forts which they had then in their Possession; and these were only Three, viz. *James-Fort*, and *Sierra-Leon*, on the *North Coast*; and *Cape-Coast-Castle* on the *Gold Coast*: Nor were they then but in a very ordinary Condition for Defence, as being much out of Repair: But since that time, the Company has not only rebuilt and enlarg'd these Three, but likewise gave 4000*l.* for a Fort which they bought from the *Danes*, and built the several other Forts of *Dickes-Cove*, *Succundee*, *Commenda*, *Queen-Ann's-Point*, *Annamabo*, *Winebah*, *Accra* and *Whidab*, all new from the Ground; besides their settling several other Factories on that Coast; the Charge of all which, together with the Expence of furnishing them with great Guns, small Arms, Ammunition, Provision and Stores of all sorts, and with constant Supplies and Repairs; as also the Interest of that Money so laid out, could not but amount to several Hundred Thousands of Pounds; tho' the Company is so modest as not to charge any Interest for the same, but have estimated

The private Trader's malicious Estimation of the Company's Forts and Castles clearly disproved; and a just View given thereof.

mated the whole at 150000 *l.* which Estimation will still appear to be the more moderate, if it be consider'd that, for one single Fort belonging to the *Brandenburgh* Company on the same Coast, a Person specially authorized by them to sell it, demanded 50000 *l.* of the *Royal-African-Company* about Twelve Months ago. Yet the private Traders by a Method of Probation peculiar to themselves, as well as that of their Computations, will needs impose a Belief upon the Nation, that all the *Royal-African-Company's* Forts and Settlements above-mention'd are worth no more than 4100 *l.* or thereabouts; and they prove it thus: They inform'd the Commissioners for Trade and Plantations, that (at the time of passing the Act for laying the Trade open in the Year 1698.) all the Forts and Castles then in the Company's Possession were valued by some private Traders (meaning such as were formerly called *Interlopers*) who pretended to be well acquainted with the Company's Affairs, at no more than 41000 *l.* or thereabouts, which the Commissioners repeated again in their aforesaid Report, and the private Traders have lately printed the very same Words, by way of Extract out of the said Report, as a notable Proof of the same Assertion without Doors; yea, and to mend the Matter, they have either wilfully filch'd out, or negligently dropt one of the Cyphers of the said Sum in the Copying; by which means the 41000 *l.* is abridged to 4100 *l.* So that if such Computations and Proofs as these be sustain'd as real, it will be no difficult Matter to make not only this Company's Stock, but likewise the Stocks of all the Companies in the Kingdom appear ridiculous and worse than nothing in the Eyes of some sort of People.

A farther Instance of the vexatious and restless Spirit, by which the private Traders do create matter of Disturbance to themselves and others, to no other Purpose at all.

Nor could the private Traders rest satisfied here until they had prompted the Commissioners for Trade, to demand from the *Royal-African-Company*, an Account of the Value of their Joint-Stock in 1698; what Sums have been since call'd in; what Dividends were made by them during the aforesaid Time; the Value of their present Stock; the Debts owing by the Company; how often they had balanced their Books; and what these Balances had amounted to, &c. In compliance with the Commissioner's Orders, the Company gave them particular Accounts of all the aforesaid Heads, and several others of the same Nature; but for what Purpose, is (I own) past my Understanding. I cannot suffer my self to suppose that it could be towards rectifying any part of the Constitution; because in that Case, they would, without doubt, have order'd the separate Traders to have given in Accounts likewise of the same Nature; shewing the Names and Qualities of such as traded separately the first Year, after the Parliament had granted them a Permission to Trade to *Africa*; who and how many of these were concern'd in the same Ships and Stocks; what their several Proportions were; how much of the Money adventured by them was truly their own, and how much borrowed; what Debts each of them ow'd; how much thereof was upon Bond, and how much upon Judgment; how many of them have been ruin'd by that Trade, and put in the *Gazette* as Bankrupts; how often all of them had adjusted their several and respective Accounts; what Profit the one had, and what Loss the other; how the Balance of Profit and Loss stood at the Years end, with respect to all the separate Traders collectively consider'd;

der'd; how many of those who traded the first Year, continued to trade the second; and so on progressively, from Year to Year, till this Time. Beyond all peradventure, these Gentlemen would have thought such an Inquisition a very hard and disagreeable Morfel, for their own Digestion; and yet in effect it would have been no more than what the Company was obliged to swallow.

But truly, considering how very much all the Merchants and other Traders in *Britain*, (whether in Joint-Stock or separately, whether by Wholesale or Retail) do deal upon Credit; it is most evident, that such Expiscations as these, may be very provoking and of injurious Consequence, but can never be of any real Use towards settling and fixing the Constitution of any Trade, and much less of that to *Africa*; which is always attended with several uncommon Circumstances. Nor can it be of any Importance towards settling the aforesaid Trade, on a right Foot, to know whether the Company or separate Traders have traded for most Stock; since it is unquestionably certain, that neither of them have traded profitably: Nor is it indeed morally possible, that ever they can trade to Advantage, upon the Foot of a divided Interest; which (as I have heard several Gentlemen of the Company declare) is the true reason why they have not traded all this Time, for more than they have done; nor raised a farther Additional-Stock, for that End. And altho' the Company were not existent, yet the same divided Interest would unavoidably have still remain'd among the separate Traders themselves; and would consequently have produced the like or worse Effects.

The bad Effects of such a vexatious and needless Inquisition, and divided Interest.

It would be almost an endless Labour, to enumerate, and expatiate upon all the Absurdities and Inconsistencies, which could naturally be inferr'd from the several Topicks made use of by the separate Traders; and therefore I shall, at this time, conclude what I have already said, on that Head, with this general Observation, on the Contents of the aforesaid Report: That the separate Traders have not adduced any Vouchers for supporting the several Allegations, Suggestions and supposititious Computations, which they had the Confidence to give in to ~~upon~~ the Commissioners for Trade: And tho' the Commissioners did not avouch these as Truths; yet the transcribing them, by way of Report, and intermixing them with such Accounts as were demanded of the *Royal-African-Company*, has happen'd to give them some more seeming Authority, than can reasonably be supposed, to have been ever intended by the Commissioners: For, by the Instances already given, it is manifest, that the separate Traders have taken occasion from thence, to print certain Paragraphs of their own bare Allegations, by way of Extracts out of the said Report, as Vouchers to gain Credit to the very same Allegations again without Doors. Which may serve as a Caveat to such as now are, or hereafter shall be, at the Helm of publick Affairs, to be better satisfied, touching the Nature and Circumstances of Things, and of the Certainty of alledg'd Points of Fact, before they seem to give too much ear to Suggestions; lest that by the Interposition of any Shadow of their own Authority, they may seem to give a Currency to the false and counterfeit Coin of others; under the Colour of their own Stamp.

The sinister Use which the private Traders have made of the Commissioner's Credulity.

Some Considerations on the Nature and uncommon Circumstances of the AFRICAN Trade.

The Temper of the Natives described.

BETWEEN *Axim* and *Accra* (not altogether sixty Leagues along the Gold-Coast, nor above thirty Leagues up the Country; which is the farthest that any European now alive, ever pretended to have travel'd towards the Heart of that part of the *Continent*) there are about twenty several petty Principalities and States, govern'd by as many different Sovereigns, wholly independent of one another: The Natives are generally so very Poor and Avaricious, and naturally so very Mercenary and Treacherous, even to one another, as well as to the *Europeans*; that the most solemn Engagements can never secure their Fidelity, longer than it makes for what they think to be their Interest at the time; unless a co-ercive Power oblige them to it: They are continually invading each other's Property, and seizing one another's Goods; which occasions perpetual Wars among some or other of them: And the Victors do commonly sell their vanquish'd Neighbours, as well as their own Slaves, to such European Merchants, as they happen to be most in Friendship with at that time.

The Practice of such Europeans as have settled on the Coast of Africa.

All the European Nations who trade to that Coast, have, for establishing, preserving and improving their Interest and Power among these petty Sovereigns, found it necessary, at first, not only to bribe and engage their Friendship, with certain agreeable Presents; but likewise (after having, by such means, obtain'd the Native Proprietor's Consent) to erect Fortifications and Settlements at such Ports as they found most convenient, for carrying on their design'd Trade: And as their Power and Interest encreased, so they always, from time to time, augmented the Number of such their Fortifications and Settlements.

The Nature of Alliances on the Coast of Africa.

The Sovereigns of these several Countries, have frequent Alliances and Confederations of Peace and War, with some one or other of their Neighbours, against some other Confederates, on the same Coast; and each of them do commonly confine the Trade of their own and their Confederates respective Countries, at least the Benefit of Pre-emption, to the Forts, Factories and Settlements of such European Nations as are most dextrous in acquiring and preserving their Friendship, by renewed Presents and Alliances, as occasion requires; and by shewing a more than ordinary Vigilance and Care in supporting them against the Infractions and Depredations of others.

The Practice of the Dutch Company on the Coast of Africa.

The *Dutch* (who of all other European Nations are distinguish'd for being the most politick and designing People in Trade) have left no Means unessay'd for engrossing as much as possibly they can of this Trade to themselves: They have eleven several Forts and Settlements along the Gold-Coast, and upon all Occasions, given very considerable Bribes to the Natives; as they themselves have acknowledg'd even in Print: * Nor have any of their trading Companies ever been known to be very Scrupulous or Ceremonious in observing point of Right, with

* Vide Bosman's Letters printed at Am-
tricht.

with the People of any Nation, whenever they found themselves vested with a sufficient Power to execute their Designs, and make their Pretensions good: For Proof thereof, many Instances might be given; but the following noted one may serve at present:

The *Portuguese* were settled on the Gold-Coast, many Years before the *Dutch*; yet the *Portuguese* not trading by a Joint-Stock, as the *Dutch* always did, and consequently not being in a Condition to maintain their precarious Possession against an united Force; were, by degrees, wholly supplanted and driven, by the *Dutch*, from all their Settlements there: Yea now, the *Dutch* do not only seize all the *Portuguese* Ships which they find trading on that Coast, and oblige them to pay an arbitrary Duty of at least 25 *l. per Cent.* of their whole Cargo, for a Permission to trade there; but make likewise a publick Jest of them into the Bargain: Witness Mr. *Bosman's* Scoffing Character of them in a Book lately printed at *Autrecht*, viz. *That formerly the Portuguese served only for Setting-Dogs to spring the Game, which as soon as they had done, was commonly seized by others:* And as the *Dutch-West-India-Company* has served them thus on the Coast of *Africa*; so it's well known that the *Dutch-East-India-Company* has served them long ago, after the same manner in the *East-Indies*.

But Experience (the ordinary School-Mistress of Fools) having, it seems, at last made the *Portuguese* wise enough (tho' somewhat too late) to see the Necessity of trading to *Africa* by a Joint-Stock, if at all; they have some Years ago (as I am inform'd) followed that Method; and have, at this time, two Forts, on the North Coast of *Africa*, and one upon the Coast of *Angola*, towards the *Cape of Good-hope*.

The *Danes*, *Brandenburghers*, and some Years ago the *French*, have all of them, establish'd Companies for trading to *Africa*, with Joint-Stocks and exclusive Privileges. However the *Dutch* Company has so far got the Start of them in Fortifications, and in the Experience of the properest Methods of practising upon the Natives, according to the several Circumstances of such different Emergences as do and must daily happen, that hitherto they have scarcely consider'd all these *European* Companies jointly, as Competitors with themselves alone, in the Trade of the *Gold-Coast*: And therefore, to the end, probably that they might not seem to have too much Work upon their Hands at once, they have, for several Years past, contented themselves, only with observing the Progress of these several Companies, and by certain secret Springs, embarrassing their Measures with the Natives, as well as with one another: All which may be easily gather'd from their own Writings; beside such other Accounts thereof as are frequently had from that Coast.

But the *Dutch-Company* considering the more exalted Genius and establish'd Reputation of the *English* Nation, for making Improvements in Trade and Navigation; have, all along, look'd upon the several Efforts made by the *Royal-African-Company*, and their Predecessors, for establishing and preserving the *British* Interest on the Coast of *Africa*, with a much more jealous Eye, and more intense Application, for rendering their Designs and Endeavours abortive, than can well be imagin'd by any one at this Distance, who has not been at more

G.

than

than ordinary pains, to be inform'd concerning the several Intrigues and Transactions of the *Dutch-Company's* Agents, in those Parts, for a Series of many Years past.

The Royal-African-Company takes Precaution, from former Usages of the Dutch-Companies.

The *Royal-African-Company* on the other hand, taking a just and necessary Precaution, from the hard Treatment which their Predecessors had formerly met with, on the Coast of *Guinea*, and which others of their Country-Men had likewise met with from the *Dutch-Companies*, both in * *Asia* and *America*, as occasion offer'd; have, for the Prevention of any such Usage thereafter, as much as in them lay, and for securing and enlarging the *British* Interest in *Africa*, purchas'd, built, repair'd and maintain'd a greater Number of Forts and Settlements on that Coast, than could have well been expected, while they were under the Pressure of all these complicated Difficulties and heavy Circumstances with which they have struggled these twenty Years past: They bought, built or rebuilt three Forts on the North Coast, and ten Forts, besides three Factories, which they have on the South or Gold-Coast.

The Interest of other foreign Companies incompatible with that of the Royal African-Company; & vice versa. Instances of several Ways by which the Dutch-Company's Agents do study to lessen the British Interest on the Coast of Guinea.

These Forts and Settlements are generally so Contiguous to, and intermix'd with the several Forts of other *European* Companies, and more especially the *Dutch*; that (as Matters are carried on there) the Interest, Security and Success of one Company seems in a great measure, incompatible with that of the other.

It has been an old and constant Practice of the *Dutch-West-India-Company*, by Presents and otherways, to create and foment Quarrels between some of the neighbouring petty Kings and States; and to assist the one side with Arms, Ammunition and other Necessaries, upon Promise and Condition, that (after prevailing against their Enemies; they'd turn all other *Europeans* out of their Country, or at least to bring and confine as much as possibly they could of their Trade to the *Dutch* Forts and Settlements. This necessarily oblig'd the *Royal-African-Company's* Agents, in Self-Defence, to follow much of the same or the like Methods: Which indeed produced not only many Skirmishes and Fightings between the Natives, Allies of the said respective Companies, inasmuch that the Agents and Servants of these Companies themselves came, at last, to be often personally engaged therein; but has likewise occasion'd the Forts, Factories and Settlements of these Companies to have been sometimes insulted to a most injurious Degree; yea the *Dutch-Company's* Agents, in order to gain their Ends, have tried all the ways they could think of, to render the People of this Nation contemptible in the Eyes of the Natives. They have represented us in very ridiculous Hieroglyphicks or Mock-Pictures. They have shown to the Natives, by the Map, what a little Spot of Ground *Britain* is, in comparison of the rest of the World; calling what part thereof they thought fit, by the Name of *Holland*, and it's Dominions. And after King *William's* Accession to the Throne of *Great Britain*, the *Dutch-Company's* Agents to magnifie their own Country and Power, told the Natives, *That tho' King*

* Vide De Britaine's *Dutch Usurpation*, 1672. *Stub's Justification of the War against the Hollanders*, 1672. and Sir Josiah Child's *Confutation of a Treatise, intituled, A Justification of the Directors of the Netherland's East-India-Company*, 1688.

William was King over Britain, yet he was only one of their Lords in Holland, &c.

The *Dutch-Company's* Agents have also a Faculty of seducing the *Royal-African-Company's* Servants, by all the Inticements imaginable, nor do they ever fail to encourage, entertain and defend such of them as desert their Master's Service; a Practice so disagreeable to the naturally much more generous Temper of the *English*, that they have always reprobated the same, by remonstrating against it, to the several Generals of the *Dutch-Company*, as occasion required.

Several Treaties were set on Foot, between the Generals and Agents of these two Companies, for conciliating and compromising all such Differences as happen'd between them, from time to time, and these Treaties were observed, till the *Dutch-Company's* Agents found out new Occasions, to break them; yet they never wanted new Pretences and Evasions in Store, for shifting the Blame directly off themselves: So that upon the whole Matter, it may very justly be said (without any Paradox) that tho' the *Dutch* have been our Confederates in *Europe*; during the last and present War, as finding their Interest by it, and because indeed their own Safety depends upon, and is involved with ours; yet it is most certain that, without regard to either Peace or War at Home, the *Dutch-West-India-Company* and the *Royal-African-Company* of *England*, have constantly maintain'd a sort of private War, the one against the other, for the Empire of Trade on the Coast of *Guinea*, these 30 Years past.

And when with much Care, Trouble and Expences the *Royal-African-Company* had brought their Affairs to be in a condition of over-topping their foreign Competitors, in that Trade; a more fatal Enemy than the former, sprung up here at home, in their own Bosom; not only dividing their Interest, and weakening their Foundation, but likewise overturning and making void the very Maxims of Policy, by which they supported and preserved the *British* Interest in *Guinea*.

I shall not say that the *Dutch-West-India-Company* had directly imploy'd any Instruments for blowing the Coal of our Divisions, here at home, about the manner of carrying on the Trade to *Africa*; but, if we may draw Inferences from their former Practices, they have given us sufficient Ground to believe, that they are a People capable of doing such Things; provided they find proper Agents to work by: And I may confidently aver, that their carelling our Interlopers formerly (when they were suppressing their own) and their cajolling our separate Traders now, since the Trade from hence has been laid open, looks too much like a Design of making Use of them as Tools, for ruining the *British* Interest in *Guinea*, by dividing it, both at Home and Abroad.

I had almost forgotten to tell that, among the many other Artifices practis'd by the *Dutch-West-India-Company*, for aggrandizing themselves and their Interest in those parts, they oblige the Generality of the separate Traders Ships to strike, and in good Manners, to salute their Forts in *Guinea*; and then from thence they inculcate into the Natives an Opinion of the Power and Dominion which they exercise over the *British* Ships and People.

The Dutch-Company seduce the Royal-African-Company's Servants.

Several Treaties between the Agents of these two Companies, but a perpetual private War carried on mutually, the one against the other.

The separate Traders destroy the Royal-African-Company's Maxims of Policy on the Coast of Africa.

The separate Traders play the Game of the Dutch-Company for them.

Such of the separate Traders as come within reach of the Dutch Forts on the Coast of Guinea, strike to them.

An Account of
the Names, Si-
tuations, and
Distances one
from the other, of
the Forts of the
several Europe-
an Companies,
who have Set-
tlements on the
Coast of Africa.

But to give the Reader a more distinct Notion of the Usefulness of the Forts and Settlements formerly mention'd, and how they are intermixt with the Forts of other Nations, I shall subjoin an Account of all their several Names of Distinction, with their respective Situations and Distances, one from another; as they lie along the Coast, from North to South.

On the North Coast.

French	Senegal, in the Entrance of the River <i>Senegal</i> .
French	Goree
English	James Island, in the Entrance of the River <i>Gambia</i> .
Portuguese	Cutcheo.
Portuguese	Bisseo
English	Bence-Island.
English	York-Island.

On the Gold-Coast.

		Miles distant
Dutch	Axim.	2
Brandenburgh	Aquedab	2
English	Dickies-cove	3
Dutch	Butteroe	3
English	Succundee	15
Dutch	Shumab	9
English	Commenda	12
Dutch	Comenda	$\frac{1}{2}$
Dutch	De Mina	9
English	Cape-Coast	9
English	Fort-Royal	1
English	Queen Ann's-point	$\frac{1}{2}$
Dutch	Mouree	2
English	Annisban	3
English	Annamabo	3
English	Agga	1
Dutch	Cormanteen	3
Dutch	Apough	30
English	Sbidab	3
English	Winebab	7
English	Accra	36
Dutch	Accra	$\frac{1}{2}$
Danish	Accra	3
English	} Whidab, the principal Place for purchasing great Numbers of Negroes, about $\frac{1}{2}$ Mile distant from each other.	
French		
Dutch		

The Necessity of
maintaining
Forts and Set-
tlements on the
Coast of Africa
farther evinced.

From this clear View of the intermix'd Situation of all these Forts and Factories; the different Designs and Interests of the several contending Proprietors thereof; the naturally avaricious mercenary Tempers, rapacious Inclinations, and treacherous Cruelties of the Natives in general; the Vicinity and Multiplicity of the circumjacent petty Princi-

Principalities and States, (whose Enmity or Friendship in point of Trade, or any thing else is chiefly govern'd by the several Alliances and Confederations, which they make between themselves, as well as with the Deputies or Generals of the several European Companies, who trade among them) the constant underhand Practices of these Europeans, whether in time of Peace or War; and from the Uncertainty and Mutability of these Alliances, except where their Interest always ties the Parties, according to the several Emergencies, which different times and things may produce; any considerate Person may easily see the absolute Necessity of maintaining Forts and Factories for the Security and Preservation of the *British* Interest on that Coast: Yea the necessary use of them may be much more readily imagin'd than expressed. And certainly how far soever the separate Traders unaccountable Zeal against the *Royal-African-Company*, may have transported their Humor beyond the Bounds of a cool Reflection, concerning the Usefulness of these Forts, they may depend upon it, that if, by any Misfortune whatsoever, they should happen to fall into the Hands of our Foreign Competitors on that Coast; then the best Treatment, which the private Traders themselves could reasonably hope for, would be only *Polyphemus's* Fate, to be the last that should be destroy'd; that is, they would thereafter be strictly discharged from trading any farther upon that Coast, without paying an Arbitrary-Duty to the *Dutch-West-India-Company*, for their Permission; as the *Portuguese*, who were there long before them, do at this time.

Some Arguments shewing that the Constitution of the Turkey-Company, or of any other regulated open Trade, cannot be suited to the Nature and Circumstances of the Trade to AFRICA.

I Would gladly persuade my self that the Separate Traders, at least the greatest part of them, are not of so tenacious a Temper, as to have hardened themselves against all manner of Conviction; but that on the contrary they'll be now prevail'd upon, by the Force of Reason, to relinquish their former Mistakes, and close heartily with such Measures as, upon full and mature Consideration, shall be thought most reasonable, for carrying on the Trade to *Africa*, with the greatest Security and Advantage, upon a National Foot; yet some few there are among them (I am told) whose private Interest and Designs have a quite different Tendency; and therefore rather than seem to acknowledge themselves to have been in an Error all this time, are for persevering in the same Error still, under the Colour of a different Denomination only; for, being convinced that the Steps which they have already made are not justifiable; they propose, that the Trade to *Africa* should, by dissolving the present Joint-Stock for good and all, be laid

The Private Traders propose now a regulated Trade to Africa upon the Foot of such a Constitution as that of the Turkey-Company.

H more

more open than ever, and carried on by a regulated Company, like that to *Turkey*: Yea, the View of some such Scheme may probably be one great Reason, why they have been at so much Pains, to depreciate the Value of the Company's Forts and Castles; as hoping, if that Project should happen to take, that the Property of these would of course, at a very low Estimation, fall into the Hands of such Persons only as should then think fit to trade thither.

A shrewd Suspicion of the true Reason why the private Traders seem to slight the use of Forts and Settlements. Nor can this be reckon'd a meer Suggestion, when we consider, that the private Traders have already made such Advances therein, as to have signified to the Lords Commissioners for Trade and Plantations, that they are willing to come into a Method for maintaining the Forts and Castles (if thought needful) upon the Foot of a regulated open Trade, like that to *Turkey* as aforesaid.

The private Traders design now to maintain the Forts, if they may have their Will. This looks too much like an Intention of dealing pretty roundly in the first Place, with the Company's Property; and that too after a most preposterous Manner; but the Strefs of the Argument not lying there, I shall wave the Consideration thereof at present, and let the Reader see that a regulated open Trade to *Africa*, after the Manner of that to *Turkey*, would be so far from mending the Matter; that any farther Experiment of that kind would, in all Probability, compleat the Ruin which the late Experiment of laying the Trade open, has begun.

The Constitution of one Trade not always suitable to the Nature of another. No Man I suppose, will doubt, but that a Constitution may be very well suited to the Nature and Circumstances of one particular Branch of foreign Trade, which can never be properly adapted to another Trade unavoidably attended with quite different Circumstances, and whose Nature must consequently require a different Constitution as well as different Rules of Management.

The Constitution of the Turkey Company nowhere regarded or followed, out of England. 'Tis no part of my present Purpose, to find fault with the Constitution of the *Turkey* or any other regulated Company of this Kingdom; but, by the by, it's very observable that, out of *Britain*, there is no such Constitution of Trade in any other Kingdom, State or Commonwealth in the whole World, that ever I could read or hear of: For all those foreign Trades which are regulated and confin'd to certain Persons in *Britain*, qualified as the Constitution of the *Turkey-Company* requires; are wholly open and free to all People indistinctly, in all other Kingdoms and States whatsoever; in the same manner as our Trade to *Spain*, *Portugal*, *Italy*, &c. is carried on. And I am perswaded that, upon Examination, it would be thought no Paradox to assert that, in the Nature of convertible Terms, any Branch of foreign Trade which can be carried on, by a regulated open Trade, such as that to *Turkey*, *Russia*, &c. might be carried on without any Company at all; and that, *vice versa*, if it were not Practicable to have carried on such Trades as these, without any Limitation or Regulation at all, such a Constitution as that of the *Turkey-Company* could never have brought any of them to bear: But these being Constitutions of earlier Times, when our foreign Trade in general was in its Infancy, in Comparison to what it now is; and these Branches of Trade having ran in that Channel, and being carried on, all along, in that Method, for many Years together, I should be sorry to see any new Attempts made, for altering the same; or making any

any Infringements on the Old Constitution: Innovations and New Experiments being always dangerous in most Cases of that Nature.

And that there is no Parallel between the Nature of the Trade to *Turkey*, and of that to *Africa* may be farther seen from this; That whereas in *Turkey* there are at most but two or three principal Places of Trade, and all under the Dominion and Government of one Prince whose Subjects are tied by the Rules and Forms of certain Courts of Justice; it were no difficult Matter for the Queen of *Great Britain*, by her Ambassador, to have her Subjects there vindicated and righted, even if there had been no Company; as the *French King*, the *Venetians* and the *Dutch* have done all along; but upon the Coast of *Africa* there is an indefinite Number of petty Princes and sovereign States, all independent of each other (as has been already related at large) and their People are so wholly void of all manner of Principles of Equity or Justice; that, without the Terror of a constant co-ercive Power kept over their Heads on the one Hand, and the Temptation of such Presents as are frequently made to them on the other, together with a politick Management of the several Alliances formerly mention'd, no *European* who had any thing to lose could ever reckon upon any Safety among them. But if the separate Traders to the Coast of *Africa* will undertake to reduce all the Natives of that Coast under the regular Government of one Sovereign, and charm them so as to become as polite and civilized a People as those of *Constantinople*; then, and not till then, can it ever be, that the Constitution of our *Turkey-Company* may be a fit Model and Pattern for settling the Trade to *Africa*.

It is allowed by all Parties, that the several Confusions which have happen'd in our Trade to *Africa*, have been chiefly occasion'd by the different Interests of the several Traders thither; and as the laying open that Trade was the sole cause thereof, it is absurd to think that the Effect can be taken away, while the Cause remains. So truly in my humble Opinion, the laying open that Trade, with or without a Company, must be always much at one upon the Matter.

And since by the separate Traders proposing at last to come into a Method for maintaining the Forts and Castles on the Foot of an open regulated Trade, it appears likewise that all Parties do think Forts and Castles necessary for securing and preserving the *British* Interest on that Coast; it is certain, that were there no other Incongruity in the Project of such a regulated Trade; yet even that same of maintaining the vast Charge of Forts, Castles and Alliances, by such a precarious Fund, as that of voluntary Contributions, would soon prove an unsurmountable Difficulty: For tho' in the beginning, and in time of Peace, the Novelty of such a Constitution might possibly tempt several Persons to trade upon that Foot, for a spurt; and that their several regulated Contributions might perhaps do something towards defraying the said Charge, for some short time; yet no Man being bound by such a Constitution to trade longer, or for more Stock, than he thinks fit, it is not to be supposed but that whenever they'd come to find their Profit not answerable to their Expectation, they would quickly draw their Necks out of the Collar, and give over the Trade by Degrees (as they have already done in the former Case) till at last, for want of the needful Contributions, the aforesaid Alliances would

No parallel between the Nature of the Trade to *Turkey* and that to *Africa* farther demonstrated.

The laying open the African Trade, own'd to be the Cause of all the Confusions in it; so the having it open still, under a different Name, will not mend the Matter.

The Vanity of pretending to maintain Forts and Castles by the Contributions of precarious Traders.

would be neglected, and the Forts and Castles must of course, become ruinous and deserted; and then the old Proverb made good, *That every Man's Business would be no Man's Business.*

Several farther Arguments proving, that our Trade to AFRICA, cannot be preserved and carried on effectually by any other Method, than that of a considerable Joint-Stock, with exclusive Privileges.



THE Impracticability, or at least Improbability, of ever trading to *Africa*, securely, creditably and advantageously, in the Method of either an illimited open Trade, like that to *Portugal*, or of a regulated open Trade, like that to *Turkey*, being already demonstrated, as far as the Nature of the Case seems to require or admit of a Demonstration; it consequently follows, that a suitable Joint-Stock with exclusive and other encouraging Privileges, and the maintaining a co-ercive Power on the Coast of *Africa*, are the only probable Means by which the *African* Trade can be effectually carried on, so as to be made a permanent, creditable and advantageous Trade to *Britain*: Yet, for illustration of that Position, I shall adduce some farther Arguments from Reason, Experience, and the universal Practice of all Nations who trade thither, to prove the same.

The first Argument is founded on a general Maxim observed by the Dutch, &c.

First, The *Dutch* (who of all Nations whatsoever are generally allow'd to be the People now extant, who have given the most convincing Proofs of their consummated Knowledge and Experience in Trade) have laid it down for a Maxim, that in all foreign Trades where the Trade must be maintain'd by Force and Forts on the Land, and where they cannot conveniently keep up an Amity and Correspondence by Ambassadors only, there seems to be an absolute Necessity of carrying on such Trades, by Joint-Stocks. And certainly, by parity of Reason, the same Maxim must hold equally good with us, as with them. Unity in their Councils, and an Uniformity in their Rules of Management has laid the Foundation of that State, and rear'd it up to that mighty degree of Strength and Power which makes them now so considerable both at Home and Abroad; according to their own Motto, *Concordiâ res parvæ crescunt*. And tho' they be the great Asserters of Liberty, and do exercise it without Contrôll or Limitation, as to all other Trades; yet, upon the Foot of the aforesaid Maxim, they have always found it necessary to carry on their Trades to the *East-Indies* and the Coast of *Africa*, only by Companies with Joint-Stocks and exclusive Privileges; and that, by reason of the great Charge, Danger and Difficulties commonly attending them. Yea, these Companies are always protected and defended by

by the Laws of their united Provinces, which are of the same Force with them, as Acts of Parliament are with us: But tho' we have likewise had Companies with Joint-Stocks, for trading to the *East-Indies* and the Coast of *Africa*; yet those not having been establish'd with the Sanction of Parliamentary Constitutions, a Door was always left open, for frequently disturbing their Measures, and interrupting the Progress of their Trades and Acquisitions, chiefly by reason of a divided Interest always kept up among our selves: Insomuch, that it might have been properly enough said, that we had verified the very Reverse of the *Dutch-Motto*, viz. *Discordia res magnæ dilabuntur*.

Secondly, Whenever we see several great and wise Nations having various Forms of Government, and whose Measures are influenced by different Inclinations and Interests; yet conspiring, as it were by universal Consent, in the same Means, for acquiring the same Ends of Profit, Power, and Honour, we may reasonably conclude, that they are much nearer the right way for accomplishing those Ends, than any Set of private Men whatsoever, holding contrary Opinions; especially when sway'd by personal Profit or Loss, or by any capricious Humour, Pique or Prejudice against some other interested Party. Thus we see that how different soever the several and respective Interests of the *French, Dutch, Danes, Brandenburgers, &c.* are, with respect to one another, yet they all do center in this positive Opinion, That Joint-Stocks with exclusive Privileges, and the having Forts and Settlements on the Coast of *Africa*, for maintaining a constant co-ercive Power there, and for preserving Alliances with the Natives, are by much the properest Means for carrying on that Trade, with Security, Credit and Advantage: And therefore, considering likewise how far the *Royal-African-Company* of *England* and their Predecessors have proceeded, and do still, after many Years Experience, insist upon the same Topick; it looks like too much Presumption and a self-conceited Arrogance, in some few private Persons (who seem now to personate the separate Traders here) to pretend to set up their own humourfom Opinion dogmatically against the consummated Experience and universal Suffrage of the whole trading World beside; unless they bring better Evidence for supporting their bare Opinion, than any weak Reason adduced by them as yet.

The second Argument is drawn from the universal consent of Nations; differing in other Forms of Government.

Thirdly, There is a Maxim of Policy, which holds good among Companies for Trade, as well as Kingdoms and States; That wherever any Power or Force is to be exercised, the more contracted and united that Power is, the more prevalent will be the Effects thereof. Applicable to this, is the dying Old Man's Advice to his Sons, represented in the well-known Fable of the Bundle of Arrows: And the great Reason for the late Union of the two Kingdoms of *England* and *Scotland* (tho' even before then, they were separately under the Government of one Sovereign Prince) was to corroborate their Strength, by making them one undivided Kingdom; the same in Interest, Inclination and Power; both in Offence and Defence: *Vis unita fortior*. So likewise, it's very observable that, tho' the *Dutch* traded, for some time, to the *East-Indies*, by several Joint-Stocks belonging separately to the respective Provinces which rais'd the same, yet finding upon Tryal, that the different Interests of their several Joint-Stocks did interfere

The Third Argument is deduced from a certain Maxim of Policy observed by Kingdoms and States; and followed by the Dutch-East-India-Company.

terfere one with the other, the States (contrary to the Native Humour and Genius of a Republick) did incorporate all these Joint-Stocks into one common Capital; to the end that, for the general Interest and Advantage of the whole, the same might be the more equally manag'd, by certain uniform Rules of Government, both Abroad and at Home.

The Fourth Argument is inferred from a Parallel Instance in the Case of the English-East-India Trade.

Fourthly, A farther Instance of the Preferableness of carrying on any such Trade by a Joint-Stock, may be had nearer home, from a Case exactly parallel to that of the *Royal-African-Company*: For our Trade to the *East-Indies* was establish'd and carried on, for many Years, much after the same Manner, and struggling with such like Interruptions and Difficulties, from time to time, as have been already narrated, in relation to our Trade to *Africa*; till in the Year 1698. the private Traders to the *East-Indies* obtain'd an Act of Parliament for laying that Trade open in the Method of a regulated Company: Reserving only the *Old-Company's* Right of trading, in manner, for the Term, and to the Effect mention'd in the said Act: Yet, upon Tryal, even those who procured that Act, found it necessary to unite themselves and their several Stocks in Proportion to their respective Subscriptions, so as to carry on the Trade thereafter, only with one common Joint-Stock. And tho', at least to all outward Appearance, there seem'd to be an irreconcilable Contest, and stated Emulation, between the *New* and the *Old-East-India-Companies*; yet both of them became so very sensible of the destructive Consequences necessarily attending a divided Interest in trading to those remote Parts, that they are now at last happily conjoin'd into one Company, having the same Joint-Stock, Interest and Designs; and it is also very Remarkable, that those Forts and Settlements in *India* which seem'd to have been formerly so much slighted and depretiated by the separate Traders thither, do now make up a considerable Article in the Estimation of their own present Joint-Stock.

The Fifth Argument is by stating Contraries in Opposition, one to the other.

Fifthly, As Contraries appear best, by stating them in Opposition, one to the other; so in all dubious Cases, of the same, or like Nature, the happiest Experiences are those which have been gain'd by the Calamities of Times past: Thus, while our Trade to the *East-Indies* lay quite open from the Year 1653. to the Year 1657. that Method proved so very Destructive to the several private Traders thither; that the governing Power at that time found it necessary to unite them all into one Company with one Joint-Stock, &c. So likewise while the Trade to *Africa* was laid open before the Restauration of King *Charles* the Second, the *Dutch-Company* took such Advantage of our separate Traders, that their Losses were computed to about 300000 *l.* as is already narrated at large, *Page 5th*. But by the several Particulars formerly likewise mention'd in *Page 6th*. it is manifest that, during the small Number of Years in which the present *Royal-African-Company* had the Countenance and Protection of the Government, so as not to have had their Measures embarrassed by any separate Interest at home, the *British* Interest on the Coast of *Africa*, was maintain'd and advanced much more securely, creditably and advantageously, for the common Interest of this Kingdom, and the Plantations thereunto belonging, than ever it was either before, or since, that time: And had

had the Privileges of the Company's Charter been then establish'd by Act of Parliament, so as to have prevented the domestick Divisions which have since happen'd in that Trade, by reason of our separate Interests, 'tis more than probable, that the *British* Interest had, by this time, been in a more flourishing Condition than that of any other *European* Nation whatsoever, on the Coast of *Africa*.

Sixthly, There was never yet any substantial Commerce in the World carried on, but by means of mutual Alliances and Confederations made with the Natives, how barbarous soever: And it is manifest, that Alliances of this Nature can be made only by Princes themselves, or Powers derived from them to Bodies Politick and Communities, who are Stable, Permanent and Responsible, continually ready upon the Place, by their Agents, to expostulate with or give Satisfaction to their Allies: Which can never be maintain'd with Individuals or single Persons, who being Transient and Mortal, no Man knows where to find them, when they happen to commit any Injuries: And therefore a Society establish'd with the Sanction of a Parliamentary Constitution, and having a sufficient Joint-Stock, with exclusive Privileges, and a co-ercive Power to maintain their Alliances, as well as to defend their Trade, must needs of course be in a more probable way for answering all the Ends propos'd by the Alliances above-mention'd:

The Sixth Argument is drawn from the Nature and Necessity of having Alliances with the Natives.

Seventhly, Without some fix'd Society, invested with a considerable Joint-Stock and suitable Privileges, there can be no sure Dependence upon having the *British* Plantations supplied duly with sufficient Numbers of Negroes at moderate or certain rates; for while the Trade lies open, scores of private Traders do trade for one Year, who are never heard of thereafter; and these minding only a present Gain, do exact upon, and squeeze the Planters at a most extravagant rate; without any regard to Consequences, as having no thoughts of going thither again: Whereas a settled Society, having the sole Management of the Trade, must, in all their Measures, have a special regard to Perpetuity; and thus it was during the short time that the *Royal-African-Company* enjoy'd the Trade exclusively; they sold their Negroes at very moderate rates, and trusted the Planters, from time to time, *with considerable Sums of Money, till they could conveniently pay the same, out of the Produce of those Negroes labour; which private Persons are seldom able or willing to do; and altho' they would, yet one substantial Creditor is always much more indulging and encouraging to a Debtor, than an indefinite Number of several petty Creditors can be supposed to be; because each of these, having different Views, as well as separate Interests, do commonly strive who shall out-do the other in Diligence for recovering Payment, *quovis modo*; till they ruin the common Debtor, and render him incapable of doing Justice to either: Whereas, were he concern'd only with one Society of discreet Persons, they would, for their own Interest, have a generous and compassionate regard to his Circumstances; and, by a reasonable Forbearance, enable him to pay themselves; and to continue a Correspondence and Dealing with them; and to improve his own Plantation into the Bargain: Which indeed is, or at least ought to be, the chief End of the Negroe-Trade; because upon that wholly depends

The Seventh Argument is founded upon the true Interest of the British Plantations in America.

* Vide Pag. 6. of this Treatise.

depends the great National Advantage produced by the Plantation-Trade to Britain.

The Eighth Argument is drawn from the Advantages of settling the Asciento with the Spaniards and Portuguese.

Eighthly, While the Trade to *Africa* lies open, we can never settle the *Asciento*, nor make any advantageous Contracts with the *Spaniards* or *Portuguese*, to furnish them with Negroes in their *West-Indies*: For as, on the one Hand, they'll have no Dependence on the uncertain Engagements of private Persons, whose Circumstances cannot be well known to them; so, on the other Hand, private Persons can never (without a mixture of Folly and Madness) undertake to furnish certain Numbers of Negroes, for a term of Years, at determinate and fix'd Prices; when, at the same time, they cannot possibly know but that, by reason of the different interfering Interests of many separate Traders, the Prices of Negroes upon the Coast of *Africa*, may be so far advanced, as that the prime Cost may far exceed the Prices at which they contracted to deliver them in the *West-Indies*; which would unavoidably be a very great Loss to the Nation: Whereas a Society vested with the sole Power of trading to *Africa*, cannot fail of taking their Measures in making such Contracts, so as to gain considerably by them: And it is a certain Truth that whatever is gain'd by any of Her Majesty's Subjects, whether in a Society or separately, from any foreign Nation, must of course be a National Advantage in adding to the Strength and Riches of this Kingdom.

The Ninth Argument is drawn from the Benefit of Records, and knowing, at any time, the exact Balance of our National Profit or Loss by any Trade.

Ninthly, While the Trade to *Africa* lies open, it can never be distinctly known how far (Nationally speaking) we may be either Gainers or Losers by it: For we may have the Appearance of a brisk and flourishing Trade, by seeing a considerable Number of Ships going out and coming in; yea and perhaps some few particular cunning Persons gaining considerably by Commissions, &c. while, at the same time, our National Interest is sinking daily, in the manner formerly narrated, till it dwindle away to nothing at last; and be insensibly twisted out of our Hands, by the cunning Stratagems and undermining Practices of our foreign Competitors, before we can have sufficient time to apply a Remedy, for recovery thereof: Whereas, by confining that Trade to one Joint-Stock, the Great Council of the Nation may always be satisfied, from time to time, of the Company's Proceedings, both at Home and Abroad; so that by knowing where the Distemper lies, they may with the greater Assurance, prescribe a Cure, as occasion may require: Nor can it justly be supposed, but that the View of a perpetual and uninterrupted Succession in the Management of that Trade, must, as well as the Hopes of personal Profit, naturally inspire the Managers with a much nobler Emulation, in exerting their utmost Endeavours for advancing our National Interest, beyond that of any foreign Competitor, on the Coast of *Africa*, than can be reasonably expected from the irregular, disconcerted and interfering Measures of an uncertain Number of raw and unexperienc'd Novices, trading separately, by divided Interests, liable to no Censure but their own; and having no other imaginable Views, but only a little selfish present Gain; tho' the National Interest should utterly perish thereby.

Tenthly,

Tenthly, The wisest of Men tells us, That in the Multitude of Counsellours there is Safety; and beyond all Peradventure it is so: For, our Understandings are so weak, our Knowledge so circumscrib'd, and our Lives so short; that, without conjoining the Experience of some Ages together, we are, of our selves, able to make but a very indifferent Proficiency, even in the easiest and most intelligible Science, that can be thought of. However, indeed some few there are, of all Ages and Countries, who must be allow'd to have a much more transcendent Genius for several Purposes, than the generality of the rest of Mankind. And therefore it is the great and singular Advantage of all select and compacted Societies, having the same undivided Interests, and which are establish'd upon solid Foundations, that the Wisdom, Knowledge, Capacity, Experience and Application of these few, do commonly supply the Defects of many other Persons, who are not endow'd with an equal Share of the like Qualifications.

The Tenth Argument is grounded upon the Safety that is in the Multitude of Counsellours, pointing at one common end.

Thus a *Joint-Stock-Company* establish'd upon a fix'd and suitable Constitution, cannot fail of trading with much more Security, and a far greater Probability of producing many National Advantages, than private Persons trading separately can do. For, the former have not only the Discoveries, Observations and Experience of their Predecessors standing always upon Record before them, by a continued Series of Journals, &c. But (as in the Body Natural) so even the weakest Member of such a Society may, in some respect or other, be made Useful to the common Interest of the whole Body politick; yea and partake too, in some Measure, of the Knowledge, Understanding and Judgment of those other Members whom God has bless'd with a more than ordinary Portion thereof.

This is illustrated farther in a Comparison between the Body politick and Body natural.

And as these Societies do commonly find out and make choice of such deserving Persons as are thought most capable of serving their Interest, in the several Qualities of *Generals, Chiefs, Agents, Factors, Correspondents, Masters and Navigators of Ships, Super-Cargoes, Chyrurgions, Secretaries, Clerks, Accomptants, Book-keepers, Cashiers, Store and Ware-house-keepers, &c.* So they can best afford the giving them such suitable Salaries and other Encouragements, as (if but tolerably well principl'd) might put them above the Temptation of being corrupted: And it is most certain, that if the *African Trade* were once fully settled and fix'd on the Basis of such a suitable Constitution as would naturally oblige the Natives to come to our Terms and Conditions of Barter, instead of imposing theirs upon us, as now they do; the Profits thereof could very well bear that Charge. So that such a Society might then stand in place of an Academy, for training an indefinite Number of People, in the regular Knowledge of all Matters relating to the several Branches of the *African Trade*; and the Nation would of course reap the Honour and Advantage thereof.

Other consequential Advantages attending such regular and fix'd Constitutions.

The Reverse of all which, may be easily gather'd from that infallible Position in the Gospel, *A House divided against it self cannot stand*: The meaning whereof relates to Kingdoms, Cities and Corporations, as well as to private Families; as appears expressly by the Context.

The Reverse of all these must be the Effect of a divided Interest, for the Reasons subjoin'd.

Now let us suppose an indefinite Number of Persons trading separately from hence to *Africa*; their having quite separate Stocks must

consequently make them have divided Interests: And as we cannot reasonably suppose them to be all equally endow'd with the same necessary Qualifications, so they must unavoidably have different Views and Rules of Management: And therefore (for want of both the correlative and subservient Means of Assistance afore-mention'd) the generality of these separate Adventurers, trusting most commonly both the Projection and absolute Management of the Voyage to their respective Ship-masters, who indeed are as Ignorant of the Trade, as those who imploy them, must of course come off with Loss; when perhaps some few cunning and designing Persons among them may get some private Advantage to themselves, at the Expence of irrecoverably losing the whole Trade to the Nation at last. Yea, and whenever they die, their Experience dies with them.

The Eleventh Argument is drawn from the Necessity of maintaining a Balance of Power on the Coast of Africa.

Eleventhly, In all remote Places of Trade, the Countries of petty Princes, with whom Her Majesty cannot conveniently have State-Alliances, and regular Correspondencies, by Ambassadors, or other publick Ministers, there is a Necessity of maintaining a Power equal at least with that of other *European* Nations; without which it is observed, that such petty Princes, by the cunning Designs of stronger Powers, have often been drawn into Contracts, whereby, for small Considerations, they agree to exclude all other Nations from the Trade of their respective Countries: Examples of this Nature are frequent, * not only from the Impositions of the *Dutch-East-India-Company*, upon the Natives of *Japan*, *Amboyna*, *Pollaroon*, *Polloway*, *Dam*, *Macassar*, *Zelon*, *Bantam*, &c. But likewise from the Practices of the *Dutch-West-India-Company*; who taking Example by the former, have play'd the same Game over and over again, on the Coast of *Africa*. Witness particularly their having contracted with the Natives of *Fantyn* to pay them a good round Sum of ready Money in Hand, besides a certain yearly Pension in consideration of their Aid in expelling the *English* from *Cormonteen-Fort*, and of their other Auxiliary Assistances ever since. † Under the Pretext of which Methods, they set up a pretended legal Title for justifying their Proceedings in endeavouring to undermine and exclude the *British* and all other *European* Nations, from trading upon that Coast, so that, altho' it had been Practicable, to have carried on the Trade to *Africa*, in an open regulated way, if other Nations had followed the same Method (which is never to be granted) yet in regard that all other *European* Nations do trade thither by Joint-Stocks; it would seem as unequal a Match to enter and engage raw and unexperienced private Traders against such compacted and united Constitutions of experienced Counsellours, as to fight a disordered undisciplin'd Multitude, against a well-govern'd Army of Veteran Troops supported with an inexhaustible Treasure.

* Vide the 96th Page of Sir Josiah Child's Book formerly cited. The Methods of the Dutch Proceedings in all such Encroachments upon the English, in all times having been to make one bold step, and then spend some Years in allaying the Noise of that, or paying for it not the hundredth Part of what the Concernment of it is worth to this Kingdom: And when the Noise of that is well allay'd or bought off in Europe, then to make a new Encroachment; so they began at *Japan* and *Amboyna*; and since that deceived us of *Pollaroon* and *Polloway*; then of *Dam* and *Macassar*, and lastly of *Bantam*; moving still from the East westerly, &c.

† Vide the English Translation of Mr. Bosman's Letters, pag. 59. & alibi.

Twelfthly, The *Dutch-West-India-Company* having no Settlements or Plantations in the *West-Indies*, but only that of *Curacao*, a mere Rock, and *Surinam* a most unwholesom Country for the most part under Water; and therefore scarcely improveable so as to quit Cost; notwithstanding their indefatigable and very chargeable Endeavours for bringing it to bear, have (it seems) bent their Thoughts now upon settling Sugar-Plantations on the Gold-Coast of *Africa*; a Place as improveable as the best of our *West-India-Plantations*. They have already sent for * 200 *Whidah-Slaves*, and expect, by their next Shipping from *Holland*, all proper Materials for making Sugar in *Guinea*; wherein if Successful (as in all probability they may be, if not counter-acted in that Design) it is much to be feared, (considering the Multitudes of *Negroë-Slaves* on that Coast, whose Labour is very cheap, and the Shortness of the Voyage from *Holland* to the Coast of *Guinea*, in respect of that to the *East-Indies*, from whence they already import great Quantities of Sugar) that in some few years Time, when our *American Colonies* will be obliged to make Sugar at so much greater Charge than the *Dutch* in *Africa*, they may be able to undersell us by very much, and consequently have the Staple of Sugars over all *Europe*, as they have already, that of *All-Spices*: Which Consideration alone (barring the many other weighty ones formerly mention'd) is of it self sufficient to open our Eyes, and convince us of the absolute Necessity of speedily settling and fixing our Trade to *Africa* in a *Joint Stock-Company*; with exclusive and other suitable Privileges: As the only way of splitting and defeating the Designs of our Competitors in that Trade, with a Wedge of their own Timber; that is, by taking such proper Measures with the Natives, as are not Practicable to be done in the Method of an open Trade, otherways than by making open War upon our Neighbours: Which is a Remedy, I hope, we shall not run our selves upon.

Several other Arguments might also be offer'd, upon the same or such like Topicks, for carrying on the Trade to *Africa*, by a Joint-Stock, with exclusive Privileges; but more Arguments being thought needless at present; I shall resume the first Question stated in the Introduction: Whether, as we are now circumstanced, with relation to our many foreign Competitors on the Coast of *Africa*; it may be thought more advisable, for the Nation's Interest and Advantage, to carry on that Trade, by a collective Society of capable and intelligent Men, having one and the same Joint-Stock, Interest, Designs and uniform Rules of Government and Management, with exclusive Privileges, &c. or by all such Persons indistinctly as have a mind to trade thither, when and how they please, with separate Stocks, divided Interests, and different Designs and Rules of Management?

In answer to which, it is now presumed that, upon serious and mature Consideration of all the Premises, any intelligent and impartial Reader will be inclinable to conclude.

1st. That the Preservation and Improvement of the Trade to *Africa*, is a matter of very high Importance to this Kingdom and the Plantations thereunto belonging.

2^{dly}, That

*The Twelfth Argument is from the Consideration of the Dutch-Company's settling now on Foot a Design of engrossing the Staple of Sugars, as they have that of Spices. * Vide Sir Dalby Thomas's Letter dated at Cape-Coast-Castle the 29th of July, 1708.*

2^{dly}, That Forts and Settlements on the Coast, and Alliances with the Natives, are absolutely necessary for the Defence, Preservation and Improvement of that Trade.

3^{dly}, That by any other Method, than that of a Joint-Stock, with exclusive Privileges, the said Forts, Settlements and Alliances can never be effectually maintain'd; and the said Trade carried on, so as to be made a permanent, creditable and advantageous Trade to *Britain*.

Some popular Objections against settling and carrying on the Trade to AFRICA by an exclusive Joint-Stock, fairly stated and answered.



ACCORDING to my weak Conception of Things, the Three Propositions concluding the former Chapter, are (for the many Reasons already given) as evident and demonstrable Truths, as any Proposition whatsoever, of which we can have only a moral Certainty: Yet some Persons of more refined Heads (perhaps to shew their Parts, or rather Humour) will still nevertheless be raising Dust, and starting Objections against the same, either in whole or in part; tho' more especially against the Third Proposition, until the Wisdom of the Parliament think fit to put an end to this *Paper-counter-scuffle*, by settling the Trade to *Africa* on such a fix'd and solid Foundation as may leave no Door open for the farther cavilling of every Pretender.

The Truth is, I do not foresee that any material Objection can be offer'd against all, or either of these Propositions, to which a clear Solution may not be had out of some or other of the foregoing Sheets: But lest the Advocates for an open Trade to *Africa*, may have any seeming Pretence left for triumphing before Victory; I shall fairly state and answer such of their Objections as occur to my Memory at present; with promise to give full and particular Answers to such others as they shall think fit to exhibit, after the perusal of this Treatise.

OBJECTION I. *A Joint-Stock-Company with exclusive Privileges is a Monopoly inconsistent with the natural Right of the Subject, and the Common Liberty of Mankind.*

ANSWER. This Argument proves either too much, or nothing at all: For the Principle upon which it is raised, strikes at the very Root and Foundation of all sorts of Government, whether Ecclesiastick or Civil. But the general good of Mankind being the great End of all Government; the Humours, Liberties, yea and private Interests too of particular Persons, must always yield and give way to the common Safety and general Interest of the whole System of Rationals. Thus it is that indefinite Numbers, even of Free-born Men, are contrary to their own natural Inclinations frequently press'd
for

for the publick Service in Fleets and Armies; we see that in the Case of a Siege, Fire or the like, several Citizen's Houses are pulled down or blown up, to save the whole City; and the Hands of Idiots, Lunaticks and furious Persons tied up, by special Laws, from having the Power of hurting themselves or others. Yea farther, many People have got the Word Monopoly in their Mouths, who know or consider very little of either its Signification or Import. I question very much, whether we of this Island in particular, might not have been all this while stak'd down to Agriculture only, without having enjoy'd the Benefit of those many Advantages produced by our late Improvements in Navigation-Trade and Manufactures, were it not for those Encouragements which have, from time to time, been given by Monopolies, to the Introducers and Promoters of all mechanick Arts, and other useful Inventions among us. And had it not been for the same Reason, I know not why all the Country Gentlemen, Farmers, Yeomen and others might not as justly raise an Out-cry against the exclusive Privileges contain'd in the several Charters of all the Cities, Burroughs and Corporations in *Britain*. But indeed our Capacities are not so comprehensive, nor our Abilities so very extraordinary; but that one good Trade and Calling (if duly look'd after) may sufficiently serve and imploy the time of one Man: And doubtless the more we confine our selves to any one particular Employment, the more expert we must be in the Knowledge and Practice thereof: Which is another great Reason why the Charge and Management of all difficult Undertakings should be confined to certain Sets of Men set apart for making the Prosecution thereof the chief end of their Studies.

OBJECT. II. *The limits of the Royal-African-Company's Charter comprehends no less than the Trade of Six Thousand Miles along the Coast of Africa, which is too great an Extent to be trusted to the Management of any one Society whatsoever.*

ANSW. The Gross of all the Trade of the *Royal-African-Company*, the private Traders, and all other *Europeans* whatsoever, on the Coast of *Africa*, is between the River *Senegal* near *Cape-Verde* and *Cape-Lopez* near the *Line*; which comprehends no more than 15 Degrees North Latitude; but by reason of the Coasts winding and falling in to the Eastward, the Measure by Land must be something more than in Latitude: And if, now and then, some few Ships happen to trade farther to the Northward, or to a place or two on the Coast of *Angola* Southward; yet even the Trade of these is within the limits of *Cape-Blanco* in 20 Degrees North Latitude, and of the Southern part of *Angola* to about 10 Degrees South Latitude; which (barring the winding of the Coast) will not be the third part of the Limits mention'd in the *Objection*; but let the Extent of the *Royal-African-Company's* Charter be what it will, I suppose from *Salle* in 15 Degrees North Latitude, to the *Cape of Good-Hope* in 35 Degrees South Latitude, (which I am told it is) I see no reason why a Society establish'd for the Preservation and Improvement of that Trade, for the general Advantage of *Britain*, and the Plantations thereunto belonging, should be cramped in either their Privileges or the Extent of their Charter, any more than the several other trading Companies erected by foreign Kingdoms and States for the same or the like Ends;

L

especially

especially when we look back and consider that, during all the several Periods of Time in which an unrestrain'd Liberty was either assum'd by, or allow'd to private Persons, to encroach upon the Charter of the present *Royal-African-Company*, or any of their Predecessors, since ever we had any footing in *Africa*, the Trade thither always declin'd and came to little or nothing; until reviv'd and restor'd again by successive New Grants with exclusive Privileges, upon every such Occasion.

OBJECT. III. *A Trade confin'd to the Management of a Joint-Stock-Company is commonly carried on from the Port of the Metropolis only; and by that Means all the other Out-Ports of the Kingdom are virtually excluded from having any share in the Benefit and Advantage of that Trade.*

ANSW. This may seem to be a plausible Objection, with some inconsiderate People. But has indeed nothing in it all; if we consider, that during all the time in which the Trade to *Africa* has been open by Act of Parliament, these eleven Years past, no Ship was sent thither from any Port in *England*, except that of *London*; and some very few from *Bristol*, and two or three from *Liverpool*, for an Experiment, in the beginning: From which last Port no Ship has been sent thither these six or seven Years past, for the Reasons given Page 10. So that truly, whether the Trade to *Africa* be carried on Exclusively or in an open Method, it is, and always will be, much at one with respect to all the Out-Ports of the Kingdom; for, a sortable Cargoe proper for the Coast of *Africa* cannot be conveniently had at any other Port than that of *London* only: Nor can it be denied but that, for lading even these few Ships which have been sent from *Bristol*, some parts of their respective Cargoes were sent by Land-Carriages from *London*. Yea formerly no Ships were sent from the Port of *London* it self to the Coast of *Africa*, but what had the chief part of their Cargoes from *Holland*, until the present *Royal-African-Company* introduced and encouraged the first making of several of our Manufactures here, which are proper for the Trade of that Coast.

OBJECT. IV. *If the Trade to Africa be confin'd so as to be carried on by a Joint-Stock only, those who have lately united with us (meaning Scotland) will be thereby excluded from having any share in that Trade; and the hopes of making Advantages by Trade being the chief Motives which induced them to agree to the Union; it were unreasonable to frustrate their Expectations so far as to shut them out, for good and all, from the Right of trading to so extensive a part of the World as the Coast of Africa.*

ANSW. This Objection is much of the same Nature with the immediate preceding one; and therefore the same Answer given to the former, may in a great Measure serve this. However, for the farther Satisfaction of those who have lately united with us, this Objection shall be more particularly consider'd in its full Force.

In the Year 1695. *Scotland* establish'd a Company by an Act of the Parliament of that Kingdom for trading to *Africa* and both the *Indies*: And as the Design was generally allow'd to be very Noble in it self, so was the Constitution most suitable to the Design: But having neither Strength enough, nor a sufficient Stock of their own for
pro-

prosecuting so great and extensive an Undertaking; and being frustrated of the Assistance which they expected from hence, and from some parts beyond Sea, and *Scotland* it self not producing Cargoes of portable Goods proper for either the Trade to *Africa*, or that to the *East-Indies*; they seemed, in some manner, to lay aside, or at least suspend, any Design of trading to these two parts of the World for some time; and bent their Thoughts chiefly on settling a Colony in *America*; to compass which they made indeed a considerable Effort: But the encouraging that Project not being then thought consistent with the Interest of *England*, in a separate State; and the Constitution of that Company being thought incompatible with the Laws of *England*, in an united State; it was agreed, that by the late Union of both Kingdoms, that Company should be dissolved; and as to all foreign Trade, and the Laws concerning Export and Import, *Scotland* is now under the same Predicament with all the other parts of the united Kingdoms of *Great Britain*.

I have been at some pains to inform my self concerning the Proceedings of that Company of *Scotland*, and do not find that ever they sent any Ship to the Coast of *Africa* except one; and the outward Cargoe of that one it self, was brought from *Holland* to *Leith*; which now is not practicable by Law: And tho' by the Union all the Inhabitants of *Scotland* are entitled to the same Freedom of trading to *Africa* which the Inhabitants of all the other Ports of the united Kingdom have; yet there has not been so much as any one single Ship sent from *Scotland* to *Africa*, since the Commencement of the Union: Which shews evidently, that either they have no great Inclination, or that of themselves they are under some insuperable Incapacity, for prosecuting so hazardous and difficult a Trade: So that indeed any well-grounded Hopes which the Gentlemen of that Country can be supposed to have of sharing in the particular Advantages to be had by the *African* Trade, must be only from a *Joint-Stock-Company*: For as they are equally free with the other Subjects of *Great Britain* to become Adventurers in the Joint-Stock proposed, and consequently to have a proportional Share of the Profits; so a Company having the sole Management and Direction of the Trade may order Matters so as to lade a Ship or Ships for *Africa*, from any convenient Port or Ports of the united Kingdom, where a lading may be had, either of Provisions or any other Commodity whatsoever, proper for the Coast of *Africa*; without being necessarily obliged to send a portable Cargoe from thence; because, to answer that again, they may send little or nothing of these particular Commodities in their other Ships: Whereas, in the Method of an open Trade, particular private Traders having different Interests cannot possibly have so extensive or comprehensive a View of the Trade at once, as a Society acting by certain uniform Rules of Management can have: And therefore every private Trader minding only his own private Concern and present Gain, the Trade must of course, as it is now, be confin'd to that Port where all and every one of them can have portable Cargoes; unless an exclusive *Joint-Stock-Company* be establish'd, and upon trial find it practicable to contrive Matters otherways.

I can very justly aver, that I wish as well to the Interest of those who are lately united with us, as any of the separate Traders can do; tho', under the Colour of a piece of pretended Justice to that part of the united Kingdom, they would, for their own selfish Ends, keep us still groping in the Dark; while they themselves would be fishing in troubl'd Waters. I own I have too honourable an Opinion of the worthy and ingenious Gentlemen of that Country ever to suppose, and much less to believe, that like the Dog in the Fable, they'll neither do nor let do; that is, that for the sake of retaining a mere imaginary fruitless Right of trading to a part of the World for which they have not the proper Subject or Medium of Trade, they'd obstruct the generous Endeavours of others in pursuing a National Design, which (if Successful) must naturally diffuse its Advantages, in some respect or other, throughout the whole united Kingdom, by adding to the Strength, Riches, Power and Credit thereof.

OBJECT. V. *By confining the African Trade to a Joint-Stock-Company, all the Profits and Advantages thereof can redound only to a small Number of Adventurers immediately concern'd in that Stock; whereas by having the Trade open in the Method of a regulated Company like that to Turkey, vast Numbers of all Her Majesty's Subjects may have a share of the Profits.*

ANSW. This Objection is already more than sufficiently obviated by the several Arguments contain'd in the preceding Chapter, concerning the Nature of a *Joint-Stock*; and indeed the very Reverse of what is suggested in this Objection, will upon Examination be found to be true: For, great Numbers of Persons of all Ranks, Men, Women and Children, may very well be concern'd in an exclusive *Joint-Stock*, for the Reasons particularly mention'd in the *Tenth Argument* of the aforesaid preceding Chapter; and *de facto* it always happens so: But when an intricate Trade attended with many Difficulties, like that to *Africa*, is carried on in any open Method whatsoever, without a *Joint-Stock*; the Trade and all the Profits which can be made by it, must unavoidably, in some short process of Time, fall of course into the Hands of some few particular Persons, whose Cunning will out-do that of their Neighbours: Yea, and if the Constitution of the *Turkey-Company* were made the Model by which the *African Trade* should be regulated; the far greater part of all the separate Traders themselves, who now urge that Method, would be thereby excluded, as illegitimate Persons; that is, as not being qualified in the Terms of that Constitution.

OBJECT. VI. *A Joint-Stock-Company is good for nothing, but to carry on a Stock-Jobbing-Trade, and the present Royal-African-Company have cheated the Nation by Stock-Jobbing and dividing their Stock among the several Adventurers, by which Means their Stock is become worth little or nothing.*

ANSW. At first view, this seems to be a very heavy Charge, tho' indeed it imports but little: There was never yet any great Convenience or Advantage in the Management of any worldly Concern, which has not been attended with some certain Inconvenience or other.

Commoditas omnis sua fert incommoda secum.

But to argue so as to condemn the use of any thing, from the abuse thereof, is such a Method of reasoning as can never pass with Men of sound and unbiass'd Judgments: For, one might, with as much Reason, conclude that if, in some former Ages, there has happened to be, here and there, a Bishop who did not live up to the Dignity of that Character, but was guilty of some gross immoralities; therefore the Office of a Bishop was bad in it self: I am sure this would be reckon'd a very ridiculous way of arguing; and yet the first part of the Objection is the very same upon the Matter.

It is no Concern of mine to plead in defence of Stock-Jobbing: However, supposing (for Example) that any of the Adventurers in the Joint-Stock of the *Royal-African-Company*, thinks fit to sell his Shares, as being his own Property, and perhaps the next Day again buys more Shares of that or any other Stock, from other Hands (which is called Stock-Jobbing) what can the general Stock of the Company be either the better or worse for any imaginary Value that such particular Persons may seem to put upon it? But whatever may be in that; is this a Practice peculiar to the *Royal-African-Company* only? No; let any Man read but the common News-Papers, and he'll see the same Practice in relation to all other Stocks at home and abroad: And if it be an Abuse, have we not also Tally-Jobbers, Land-Jobbers, House-Jobbers, Horse-Jobbers, and many other Jobbers too, who stand more in need of a Reformation.

Then, as to the second part of the Objection, altho' it had been true, as it is not, it would be only *Argumentum ad Hominem*, and nothing at all as to the Nature of the thing it self. Yea the Managers of the *Royal-African-Company*, (who doubtless are the Persons pointed at in the Objection) have already openly declared that, by Particulars and proper Vouchers ready to be produced to the Parliament, they can make it unquestionably appear, that, during the last and present War, the Company's casual Losses, by frequent Captures and otherways, have been upwards of 400000*l.*; and that the small Dividends made among the Adventurers, were in effect but in the Nature of Premiums and Encouragements, for contributing much larger Sums, from time to time, for upholding and carrying on the Trade, and preserving their Forts and Settlements, until a convenient Opportunity should offer for laying their Grievances before the Parliament. And if the Company's Stock be not now in so good a Condition as were to be wish'd, the many concurring Reasons already given, in the foregoing Sheets, do sufficiently evince that the Managers are not justly chargeable with the invidious Imputation of having mis-employ'd either their Time or Talent, but that the Lowness of their Stock is altogether owing to other supervenient Causes.

Some Reasons humbly offer'd for committing the Management of the AFRICAN Trade to the Royal-African-Company.



WHAT now remains to be consider'd is, in case the Wisdom of the Parliament shall think fit to settle the Trade to *Africa* (as 'tis hop'd they will) upon the foot of a Joint-Stock, with exclusive Privileges, who should be the Raisers of that Joint-Stock, and be entrusted with the Management of the Trade.

No doubt Her Majesty and both the Houses of Parliament are the only Judges who can best determine that Matter: However, the most probable and equitable View thereof which occurs at present is, that the *Royal-African-Company* have already, by their Petition to the Honourable House of Commons, signified their Willingness to raise a Stock sufficient for the Preservation and Improvement of that Trade, in all the Branches thereof; provided they be establish'd by Act of Parliament, on the Foot of some fixt Constitution, suitable to the Nature and Circumstances of that Trade; and they have also, by their publick Advertisement in the *Gazette*, signified their Willingness to admit all such Persons as have a mind to become Joint-Adventurers with them, by raising any part of the needful Stock, upon equitable Terms.

Now in case there should happen to be any Competition in point of Preference, as to the Persons to be entrusted with the Management of that Trade, upon the Foot of an exclusive Constitution; I must own that, in my humble Opinion, the *Royal-African-Company* has an equitable Claim of Preference in that matter, antecedent to that of any other Pretender whatsoever: For,

I. When the *African* Trade was in a manner wholly lost to the Nation, in the time of the last *Dutch War*, it is well known what Pains were taken by the King and Government, at that time, to persuade People to subscribe to a Joint-Stock, for the Recovery, Preservation and Improvement of that Trade; and that, upon the publick Faith of an exclusive Charter, granted then to the present *Royal-African-Company*, (which was, at that time, conceived to be an indubitable Security) they were induced not only to raise the Joint-Stock then propos'd, but of course engaged likewise to contribute and launch out several vast additional Sums, from time to time, ever since, for the Purchasing, Building, Repairing and Maintaining of Forts, Factories, and Settlements on the Coast of *Africa*, and for the Preservation and Improvement of that Trade; which, beyond all peradventure, neither they, nor any other Set of Men in the Kingdom would have done, if they had then suspected, in the least, that others should have the benefit of building upon the Foundation which they laid.

adly. Tho'

II. Tho' Charters under the great Seal, are not now lookt upon as an unquestionable Right, having all the Solemnities requisite by Law, unless they be confirmed by Act of Parliament; yet certainly, when Charters are granted for such onerous Causes and Considerations as those for which the *Royal-African-Company's* Charter was granted; and especially considering how far the granting thereof has been the means of involving the Company in many Difficulties, upon a National Account; such Charters may at least be reckon'd an Argument to move the Parliament to have an equitable Regard to the *Company's* Circumstances, and to give them an Opportunity of recovering their Losses, by preferring them to any other intruding Pretender, in the Management of the Trade to *Africa*; the preservation of which to the Nation, has already cost the *Company* so dear.

III. By continuing the Management of the Trade to *Africa* in the Hands of the *Royal-African-Company*, and such others as shall think fit to join with them, in the intended new Stock, upon the Foot of a fixt Parliamentary Constitution, the Trade may be carried on to far greater Advantages, in all Respects whatsoever, than can reasonably be expected from the Hands of any other Set of Men in the Kingdom, who were to begin upon a quite new Foot: For, the Forts, Factories and Settlements which the *Company* have already in their possession; the standing Alliances which they have in force with the Natives; the Observation, Knowledge and Experience which they have of the Nature and Circumstances of the Trade, and of the most effectual Methods of practising upon the Natives, for counter-acting and defeating the Designs of all foreign Competitors in the Trade of that Coast; and their being, all-along to this Hour, in the course of a regular Trade, (tho' under the Pressure of many Difficulties, occasion'd by supervenient and indirect Causes) are Advantages which, if yet to be procur'd and obtain'd, would doubtless be a very chargeable and difficult Task to a much more capable Set of Men than those who at this time, for their own Ends, seem to slight those Advantages so much as they do.

IV. By the many Advantages which the *African-Trade* did produce to the Nation, during the short time that the *Royal-African-Company* enjoy'd the Privilege of their Charter exclusively, before the Revolution; * it is evident that they manag'd that Trade with abundance of Dexterity and Application, with respect to a National Interest; and therefore it may justly be suppos'd, that if they were once establish'd by a Parliamentary Constitution, and were again encouraged and protected by the Government, they would still extend their Acquisitions and Improvements in that Trade, to the general Interest and Satisfaction of the Nation; yea the very *Journals* and *Records* of the *Company* may be of greater use to them, in their Deliberations about the taking suitable Measures, upon several Occasions, which may happen in the Prosecution of their Designs, than some People can readily imagine.

And

And if it should be pretended that the separate Traders have acquired abundance of Knowledge and Experience in that Trade, since the same has been laid open: I have some ground to believe that the greatest part of this their boasted Knowledge and Experience in the *African-Trade*, (such as it is) is derived chiefly from some *Deserters*, who have been debauched and seduced out of the *Company's* Service; and how far the Veracity, Probity or Integrity of such Persons ought to be relied on, I leave the *Reader* to judge.

Advertisement to the READER.

TH^O the Points of Fact, charged in these *Reflections*, either on the *Agents* of the *Dutch-Company*, or the *English* separate Traders, on the Coast of *Africa*, do generally carry their Proofs along with them; yet if it be found that the Verity of such of them, as are material, will be questioned, (which 'tis thought they will not) then the particular *Vouchers* of these, together with some further *Considerations* thereupon, shall be printed apart, in an *Appendix* to these *Reflections*.

Note, Page 19. Line 34. *dele* upon.